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AUTHOR Brockley, M. Elissa; And Others
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ABSTRACT

This manual is intended to assist elementary school teachers in developing classroom writing experiences. The sections in the first part of the manual address the individual stages of the writing process (prewriting, writing, and postwriting/editing) by reviewing research, presenting case studies of children's writing, and outlining activities, topics, and techniques for teaching each stage. The section on postwriting also examines self-editing techniques, peer editing, and holistic scoring. The second part of the manual provides selection of strategies for teaching the writing process by using resources such as newspapers, advertisements, literature, pictures, and teacher-generated ideas and materials. (RL)

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Teaching Writing: Research — Strategies

A Summer Curriculum Project—1981

Compiled by: M. Elissa Brockley
Dover Plains Public Schools

Edited by: Charles Chew and Sheila Schlawin
State Education Department

Patricia Sherman
Red Hook Central Schools

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SUMMER CURRICULUM WRITING JULY 13-17, 1981

PARTICIPANTS

Willard J. Arbuco
Pawling Elementary School
Pawling

Ellen Beach
Chancellor Livingston School
Rhinebeck

Walter R. Bell
Beacon High School
Beacon

Catherine Benson
Pawling

Gayle Bogue
Elm Drive Elementary School
Millbrook

M. Elissa Brockley
Wingdale Elementary School
Dover Plains

Thomas Brooks
Titusville Middle School
Arlington

Irma M. Brunmayer
Elementary Supervisor
Wappingers

Joeann Buerkert
Bulkeley School
Rhinebeck

Elaine Busing
Gayhead Elementary School
Wappingers

Elizabeth L. Chestney
Seymour Smith Elementary School
Pine Plains

Ralph Capasso
John Jay High School
Wappingers

Gertrude Collyer
Alden Place Elementary School
Millbrook

Ellen Contropidis
Chancellor Livingston School
Rhinebeck

Helen Della-Volpe
Millbrook High School
Millbrook

David DeMers
Wappingers Junior High School
Wappingers

Jean Florio
Chancellor Livingston School
Rhinebeck

Janet L. Freebern
Wingdale Elementary School
Dover

Linda A. Hart
Chancellor Livingston School
Rhinebeck

Doris Hatschek
Chancellor Livingston School
Rhinebeck

John J. Horgan
Wappingers Falls Junior High
Wappingers

Harriet Jacobs
Beacon High School
Beacon

Patricia Jones
Chancellor Livingston School
Rhinebeck

Jill T. Jurina
Gayhead Elementary School
Wappingers

Sally Kallop
Chancellor Livingston School
Rhinebeck

Carolyn H. Keator
Chancellor Livingston School
Rhinebeck

Roy Lane
Glenham School
Beacon

Patrick J. Leggett
Rhinebeck High School
Rhinebeck

Leslie Leventhal
Fishkill Palins Elementary School
Wappingers

Patricia A. Loeber
Chancellor Livinigston School
Rhinebeck

Bernard J. Lyons
Rhinecliff

Mary J. Martin
Chancellor Livingston School
Rhinebeck

Judith Mayer
Traver Primary School
Arlington

Jane McGrunness
Rhinebeck High School
Rhinebeck

Terrence Molon
Dover High School
Dover

Martha June Moraitis
St. Joseph's School
Millbrook

Marion B. Petty
Arlington High School
Arlington

Patricia Pisano
Pawling Jr.-Sr. High School
Pawling

Rhoda M. Post
Fishkill Plains Elementary School
Wappingers

Marian S. Quinlan
Pawling High School
Pawling

Darlene Resling
Rombout School
Beacon

William Resling
Evans Elementary School
Wappingers

Kathleen Rowe
Stissing Mt. J.-Sr. High School
Pine Plains

Elizabeth M. Schembrl
Rhinebeck High School
Rhinebeck

Lynn S. Schreiber
Dover High School
Dover

William G. Schwager
Dover Elementary School
Dover

Patricia Sherman
Mill Road Elementary School
Red Hook

Jean M. Starpoli
Alden Place Elementary School
Millbrook

Christine Turrone
Elementary School
Arlington

Jacqueline T. Witte
Bulkeley School
Rhinebeck

William Worrell
Chancellor Livingston School
Rhinebeck

FORWARD

The Summer, 1981, writing project is the fourth in a series dating back to 1978. Interest and participation have continued to grow. This manual reflects the collective work of 53 teachers and administrators from 11 districts and the leadership provided by the members of the Bureau of English Education at the State Education Department. Once again Charles Chew and Sheila Schlawin have provided their expertise in designing and directing the summer workshop and in editing this manuscript, so ably put together by M. Elissa Brockley. The Collaboration formed by the Bureau, BOCES and Elissa Brockley makes this essentially a "Three B Production".

There are special thanks due Dottie Hammond and Jerry Flax for their leadership this summer, and to Pattie Sherman of Red Hook for putting together part II, the Additional Strategies from Write? Right! and Teaching Writing Right.

And of course, let us not forget that the support of 11 districts and the active involvement of 53 participants made it all happen.

It is with great pleasure that we present this book. We hope it is with great pleasure and satisfaction that you use it.

Ken Kahn
PROJECT DIRECTOR

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INTRODUCTION

"Any entity intended to be at least a sentence unit that was composed solely by the child"- that's the definition of writing often used by writing researchers. In other words, writing is what can be seen on the paper- an accumulation of letters, words and phrases. Is this really so?

Donald Graves would say--no! "Writing is a highly complex act that demands the analysis and synthesis of many levels of thinking. . . There is more. . . than just writing down words. The observation of writing at only one point in time. . . may result in conclusions which overlook important variables."[3]

In fact, in his writing, Graves continually makes use of the terms "writing process". "composing process" and "writing episodes." Such nomenclature indicates that writing is not some cut and dried equation-like task, not simply the scrawling of symbols on paper, but rather a complex, procedural and quite dramatic happening which consists of parts, or stages.

The stages now commonly attributed to the writing process are: the pre-writing phase, the writing phase and the post-writing phase.

Since none of these exists without the others in any complete writing episode, this manual will address each equally, drawing upon what the research tells us and what the children tell us (through the case study approach). Also included are activities designed by Sheila Schlawin, Dorothy Hammond and Jerry Flax from the Bureau of English Education at the New York State Education Department. The results of these activities, when explored with the summer '81 workshop participants, also appear in this publication.

The manual is intended to assist you in developing classroom writing experiences. It attempts to add the weight of research to our "gut level" feelings about how the composing process can best enacted. It will, hopefully, assuage any doubts you may feel about "sacrificing" correctness (of grammar, spelling, punctuation and the like) for the good of expression, creativity and meaning.

It will explore for you the various methods of evaluating and scoring student writing, so that it is no longer solely you who judges written work, but often the writer himself or peer evaluators.

Most importantly, it is hoped that this manual will be for the good of the children you teach, who will as Graves says "reflect and discover. . .and be brought to a deeper and clearer understanding"[3] of themselves and their world through writing.

M. Elissa Brockley

A WORD ABOUT RESEARCH . . .

Though the documented research in the field of writing is, by the complex nature of the process, sketchy, more and more studies are being done as the importance of intellectualizing in this area is increasingly recognized. As a classroom teacher, you can read about this very new and intriguing work as it is completed. The following publications deal with writing, particularly research in writing:

Abstracts of English Studies, published by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), 1111 Kenyon Rd., Urbana, Illinois, 61801

English Education, published by NCTE

English Journal, published by NCTE

English Language Notes, University of Boulder, Boulder, Colorado, 80309

Language Arts, published by NCTE

Research in the Teaching of English, published by NCTE

These periodicals can be found in campus libraries or ordered-perhaps by your school librarian. They're ideal for keeping you up-to-date with what's happening in writing research.

PRE WRITING

LANGUAGE THEORY

Martha King, in an article entitled "Research in Composition: A Need for Theory", reminds us that writing is simply a single piece of the puzzle of language. Viewed in this way, will not the conventions that underlie spoken language predict the form for what is written?

As oral discourse is tightly controlled by the environment and social forces operating while it is given, so is written language shaped by the context in which it is produced.

King advocates that teachers "facilitate and encourage spontaneous writing activities that could . . . constitute general language learning. . . that a fuller understanding by teachers of the nature of the writing processes. . . in social institutions would make the teaching of the curriculum in all subjects more effective."[9]

This is so, King maintains, because children have continual "intentions" to express themselves, but too often in school are required to rehearse or practice specific skills and techniques. "It is likely", King says, "that curriculum will demand that a teacher arouse in his students cooperative intentions in directions he has mapped out for them." This leaves, obviously, little room for the kind of spontaneous expression linked with oral language.

WHY WRITE?

Why should we ever encourage our students to value writing in the 1980's? The electronic devices of the present day serve as means of communication themselves. They occupy our time and attention. They may actually be negatively influential on writing ability since they allow for passive involvement, while writing is an essentially active pursuit.

Martha King reminds us that the writing act involves much higher-level cognitive skills of organization, introspection and understanding of self than do C.B. radios, television and radio "call-in" shows and the like. It is the development of these skills that makes the teaching of writing not only important, but vital in an electronic age.

Mina Shaughnessy, in a discussion with high school teachers, suggested that they speak of writing as a sort of privilege granted to a certain elite group, of which students may become members only if they, too, value language.

Walshe, too, maintains that the teacher must value writing and convey an enthusiasm for it to the students. Only with the most positive attitude, can today's teacher combat the relative ease of communication by machine and encourage communication through thinking.

INSTRUCTING--NOT PROOFREADING

Research tells us that most students are given very little instruction in how to write. In a survey of high school English classes, Nathan Blount found that composition was emphasized only 15.7% of the time.[7]

Blount found that even then "instruction" meant only commenting upon and correcting what had already been written.

Too often, teaching writing is thought to mean the drilling of grammar, isolated practice in punctuation (students being given scores of sentences to work on) and the remote capitalizing of lists of proper nouns. Such activities though, do not improve writing. Many teachers feel these are worthwhile pursuits in themselves, but studies now prove that they in no way take the place of instruction in the process of composing.

Ms. Shaughnessy said, in her 1977 speech at Michigan State University, that "Writing grows like a tree, with everything growing at once: the correctness, the fluency, the structure. . . the ability to organize."[6] Spend time developing these, she says, not dealing with errors already made.

THE WRITING CLIMATE

Graves observed that the pre-writing phase, factors such as room stimuli and discussions were related to the subsequent writing. An informal classroom setup, he found, gives students greater choice, therefore they write more.[3]

This, Walshe would say, precedes qualitative writing, since flexibility increases with fluency.[14] He sees the teacher's role in the process as that of a kind of stagehand who sets the scene for the act, a scene characterized by a supportive and warm atmosphere in which students feel free to write what they know and feel.

A special writing space may be created with the classroom or in a separate "workshop" area, centrally located, where small groups of children go to write. Such a setup needs very little in terms of specialized equipment. The obvious furniture, materials and references, with perhaps some audio-visual stimuli and equipment are already present in most classrooms.[8] Combined with trusting teacher-student relationships and a value placed on writing, these form a beneficial writing climate.

TECHNIQUES

Within this supportive atmosphere, there are, of course, various methods used during the pre-writing phase.

Radcliffe, in 1972, advocated a "Talk-Write Process" by which writing was facilitated when the student first interviewed himself to discover what he already knew and what he needed to know in order to write about his chosen topic. This self-question and answer session was recorded. When the student played the tape back, he was better able to plan and organize his writing.[7]

Graves' "Process-Conference Approach" is a teacher-student interviewing strategy. The student uses the teacher as a "sounding board" for his ideas. The teacher is able to point out any gaps in the student's knowledge of his topic or inconsistencies in his logic. The student is directed to sources of further information on the subject, if needed. Such conferencing might occur twice or even three times before a first written draft is presented. Because so much prior planning has been done before writing, teacher comments at this time are more likely to be constructive tips on organizing and selecting from the wealth of information the writer now possesses and not as likely to be a mundane, "That's not enough. Sit down and write more" type response.[4]

Though the teacher has intentionally prodded the student to think and discover, and has carefully shaped the product, the young writer feels in control of his work.

Charles R. Cooper helped to develop a writing program for a suburban middle school. He believes that a central role of the teacher in the pre-writing process is to train students to work together in pairs or small groups. This will facilitate two-way peer questioning to better enable children to begin their drafts.[2]

Such a technique would certainly be used in addition to teacher-student conferencing of the type Graves described.

Eileen Tway advocates this "buddy system" approach too. She saw that in the classroom setting, oral composition planning between a pair of students affected writing outcomes where whole-class discussions did not. She attributes this discrepance to the increased amount of actual verbalization that is possible when two people converse as compared to that allowed when twenty-five people "discuss."[12]

THE CASE STUDIES

THE APPROACH

Writing researchers are, thankfully, spending more and more time in actual classrooms rather than doing all their work in more clinical, observation room settings. They want to see the writing process as it REALLY occurs, and not in an artificial, experimental situation. Because research in this area is untouched ground, and the factors involved are only beginning to be identified, the case study approach is a practical one.

Numerous interesting observations are being made as Donald Graves and his team of researchers follow a diverse group of sixteen children through two school years.

Much of the emphasis of this research is being placed on the pre-writing stage--an area that was, not long ago, without even a title.

TOPICS FOR WRITING

Are these topics that children interview themselves, each other and their teachers about initially assigned by the teacher or chosen from a list of possibilities offered to the students? Walshe would say that hopefully they are not. The teacher does not have to supply "matter" to be written about. Children have a wealth of it--of concerns, ideas and experiences.[14]

Graves agrees. He reminds us how often children scribble spontaneously: on the steamy bathroom mirror, in the snow, on the wall of the abandoned building. Children DO have an urge to write and no lack of things to write about.[5]

In fact, the selection of a topic is an important part of the writing task and students should not be robbed of the opportunity to perform it. What's needed, though, is that all-important "safe" environment in which the child can express himself without fear.

DRAWING AS PREWRITING

A significant finding based on the reports of four different observers is that for the yound child, drawing plays a large part in the preparatory phase. Drawing may, in fact, take twice as much of the child's time as the actual writing.

Graves and others also noticed that verbalization (to self or peer) often accompanies the drawing, the child adding sould effects (or audio) to his visual output.[5]

The drawing and talking actually help the children to know what they will write. Researcher Lucy Calkins questioned a six-year-old who was in the middle of doing her pre-writing illustration.

"What is your story going to be about?", Calkins asked.

"How should I know? I haven't written it yet!", the child replied.[1]

After completing the drawing though, children have a clearer idea of what to say. The drawing has created a setting for the story so that less written background information is needed and the message is clearer.

As drawing ability develops, writing style or mode may change. Calkins noticed that little Sarah, during the first few months of first grade, drew all her figures and objects head-on, face-front. Her stories at this time were static, "attribute" type messages, consisting of short sentences of praise for her hero or heroine, whether it be the sun, her dog or her friend.

Later in the year, Sarah began to draw figures in profile. This allowed for action to enter her illustrations. Legs could be bent in chase, or arms in the motion of tossing a ball. At the same time, Sarah's stories were increasingly of the "action-sequence" variety dictated by her pictures.[1]

THE MATURING WRITER

The young writer is apt to assume that his intended message will be easily understood by the reader, regardless of its unconventionality of form. Lucy Calkins, in her 1980 article in Language Arts magazine, likened this early writing to the child's play--done without planning or goal--for no purpose other than the act itself.

Six-year-old Alex waged a battle in print, piling letter upon letter, squeezing additions and corrections into tiny spaces between words. Calkins explains, "The six-year-old cannot envision an eventual audience or regard his work as a product."

The nine-year-old, by comparison, is able to achieve the distance of a reader. Words may "spill" onto the paper almost uncontrollably fast, but later they'll be reread with the critical eye of editor and redrafter. While the six-year-old has not yet achieved sensitivity to his audience, the older child is able to make the transition.[1]

To assist the student in acquiring the necessary distance from his own work, researcher Susan Sowers recommends that children be allowed short breaks in the classroom writing time for chatting with a friend, moving about the room to gather supplied (needed or not) or eating a snack.[10]

Mature writers know the value of such diversions between the planning and writing stages and periodically within these stages as well.

Calkins points out that the child's emerging sense of audience can cause the first case of writer's block. Every caution and care, then, must be taken by the teacher to allow for short lapses in wriring and even products inferior to what the child has previously done, while he wrestles with his new-found awareness of audience, of critic. Writer John Ciardi called it a "schizophrenic aspect of the writer's craft" - this attempt ot be "passion-hot and critic-cold" at once.[1]

AUDIENCES FOR WRITING

Who is this audience that the child is achieving awareness of? Most often in school we assume that it is the teacher. Audiences, though, can and should vary, and the older child should be able to state exactly whom he is writing to or for.

Writing can be intended for siblings and peers, for known authority figures such as parents, teachers and principals or for unknown ones such as government officials. It may be idrected to media heros or sports personalities. A child might choose himself as the audience for his work. The mature writer may hope for a general audience consisting of magazine readers or novel enthusiasts.

GETTING STARTED

ORGANIZING

The slightly older student probably will not rely on drawing to help him decide what he is going to say. He is better able to conceptualize, to enact this planning and idea-development process in some less tangible manner.

Ms. Mary Croft, director of the Writing Lab at U.W.-Stevens Point, suggests this "countdown."

Before You Write:
- -Do you have a subject you want to communicate?
- -Do you have the specific information your reader needs to know?
- -Do you see a pattern in those details which makes sense?

Donald Graves offers this model for pre-writing which utilizes the "buddy" or paired approach.

1. Develop five topics about which you could write.
2. Describe each topic in one sentence.
3. In pairs, interview one another about the topics.
   a. What do you already know about this topic?
   b. What more do you need or want to know?
   c. What information would the interviewer add?
4. Each person in the pair completes the interview process and then chooses one topic.

An example of Graves' step #1 written by an adult writer might look something like this:

A. How-to's of Traveling with Children
B. The Vegetable Garden--The Importance of Planning
C. Carpooling--Exercise in Diplomacy
D. Teenagers are People, Too--Myth or Reality?
E. Teachers Really Are Terrific!

For the sake of the interviewer and to develop clarity of topic for himself, this writer would then go on to Graves' step #2. Topic A might be described like this:

A. "Once you've decided to bring the kids along, you

might as well resign yourself to at least an hour's worth of Twenty Questions, another hour's ear-splitting intonation of "Found a Peanut" and bathroom stops at fifteen mile intervals."

Once all five topics have been briefly described in this way, the interview process begins. The interviewer is instrumental in the final topic choice, since the questioning is likely to dissuade the writer from a subject area he's not really interested in or knowledgeable about. The subject closest to the writer's real interests is probably the one he'll handle the most effectively.

Examples of adults' writing which resulted after use of this model appear on pages 21 - 24.

Jerry Flax offers a systematic approach for story writing in five steps:

1. Think of an activity, career, hobby or game you know something about.
2. Make up a person who will take part in this activity. Tell two things about the person:
   a. Who he/she is in general, e.g. a sophomore in high school who is trying to make the team or a high school senior who thinks he wants to be a nurse.
   b. Who he/she is in particular, e.g. man or woman, boy or girl, name, age, etc.
3. This person will have some characteristics that will either make it difficult to do the activity described above, e.g. the sophomore may have poor eyesight which prevents her from catching well or easy to succeed at the task, e.g. the would-be nurse is calm and understanding and has a strong stomach.
4. Describe what happens when the person is tested and whether or not he/she succeeds.
5. Tell how the situation turns out in the end--how the character comes to terms with success or failure.[13]

After completing Flax's five-step outline, students progress to the writing stage. An example of a story written according to this plan appears on page 25.

WARMUPS

The following verbal and written activities serve to open the mind and encourage expression, thereby instilling confidence in the writer. Though not opics in themselves, these stimuli may suggest style and even subject matter to the student.

CATEGORIES: Two teams play. A category (e.g. food) is selected. Teams alternate naming members of the category, five seconds allowed for each turn. After two minutes, the team with the most members left standing (i.e. the one with the quickest correct responses) wins.[13]

ATTRIBUTES: Another quick-response game, this deals with describing a chosen noun (e.g. An orange is _____.) One word fill-ins are allowed. Five seconds can be used for each answer. The game takes only two minutes.[13]

ALPHABET PROGRESSION: Choose a topic (e.g. feelings). Teams alternate stating one word each that would fit under this heading, each time progressing through the alphabet from A to Z.[13] Example: amourous, bewildered, cautious, depressed, ecstatic, frustrated, glad, etc.

OPPOSITES: Quick team play is involved. One states a word. The opponent has two seconds to name its opposite.[13]

BRAINSTORMING VERBS: Cards are passed out to small groups of students. Each has a phrase like "musical verb" "Exuberant verb" or "languorous verb" written on it. Group members brainstorm and write as many words as they can to fit the given description. One group in the July workshop composed this accumulation of "musical verbs."

> sing, hum, trumpet, strum, tap, drum, whistle, fiddle, harp, rhyme, repeat, intone, inflect, scale, harmonize, echo, synchopate, scat, bebop, dance, undulate, synchronize, choreograph, tintinnabulate, coo, croon, orchestrate, compose

This activity is easily modified for various grade levels

by changing the stimulus as appropriate. A writing activity could follow, in which the list of words is incorporated into a paragraph or as many as possible into a very long sentence.[13]

ROUND: The activity is begun by a member of the group who writes a brief phrase or a long word. The next person takes the last word or syllable written and uses it to begin another phrase or long word. The round continues in this way. Ideally, the original word or phrase will be arrived back at and the round will end.[13]

An example:

> baseball strike, strike a blow, blow your horn, hornbills fly, fly paper, paper moon, moon your teacher, churn the butter, turn a phrase, rays of sunshine, shyness can be overcome, come up and see me sometime, time is of the essence, since you've been gone, gonna sign off, off-base, baseball strike

These seemingly unrelated phrases might later be combined into a story, producing humorous results.

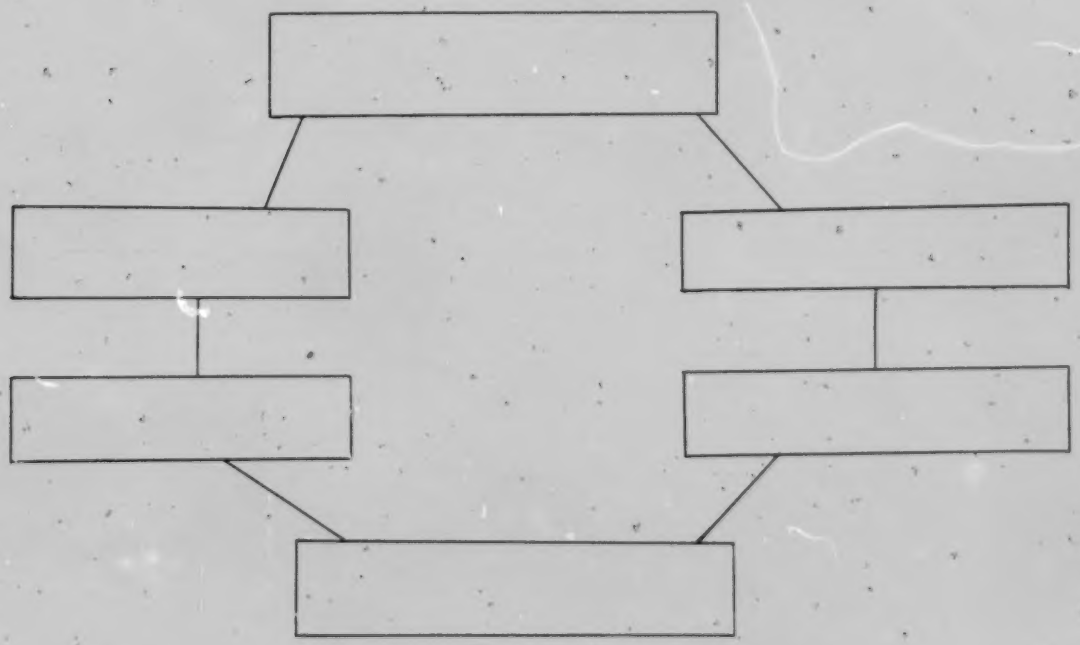
IF...: This is a paired activity in which each participant lists fifteen incomplete "if" statements for the partner to finish. These should lead to newfound knowledge about the person who completes them. Following is an example of an "if" list written by Harriet Jacobs and completed by her partner.

1. If I could fly to a special place it would be... Australia.
2. If I could read a book right now, it would be ... The Origin.
3. If I could start my career all over again, I would ...be the same.
4. If I could have a talent that I do not now posess, it would be. . .an eye for color and design.
5. If I could research something, it would be . . . the effect of mass education on society.
6. If I could spend the day with someone special, I would spend it with. . . President Reagan.
7. If I could write, I would start. . . an historical novel.
8. If I could meet a famous person, it would be. . .

Diana, wife of Prince Charles.
9. If I could be an historical figure, it would be . . . Abraham Lincoln.
10. If I were young again, I would go. . . around the world.
11. If I could cook the most fabulous meal, it would be. . . French food.
12. If I could travel in space, I would. . . go!
13. If I had all the free time I needed, I would . . . pursue my handcrafts.
14. If I could train for a competitive sport, it would be. . . swimming.
15. If I could. . . write, I would.

After these statements have been completed by the partner, the statement originator compiles the information gathered into a descriptive paragraph. This is the writing stage. An example can be seen on page 26 . Activity from "Teaching Writing Skills Through Peer Evaluation", Jerome Mebna, Brooklyn College.

ASSOCIATIVE THINKING: This is a word-association activity. A word, chosen at random, is written in the top box. Words that come to mind automatically are added to the other spaces. The follow-up writing activity is seen on page 27.[13]



SENTENCE COMPLETION: The group, working together, writes a series of sentences, all beginning the same (e.g. You know it's going to be a bad day when. . .) Following the activity could be publication of a class newsletter such as Room 6's Recipes for a Bad (or Good) Day.[13]

OTHER STIMULI FOR WRITING

VISUAL STIMULI: This technique can urge the "blocked" writer closer toward a topic. It may even serve as a sort of therapy by "bringing out the child within" and causing a flood of vivid memories that had been trapped for years to be recalled.[13]

The stimulus presented to the workshop participants by Dorothy Hammond was a bunch of roadside wildflowers cut and arranged throughtfully in a vase. The poignant recollections of adults upon viewing the bouquet are characteristic of just how deeply visual images can affect us (see pages 28-30).

COMPOSITE AUTOBIOGRAPHY: Each group member writes a short scenario about one of the following:

-earliest memory of school
-first triumph in life
-first failure
-first friend
-first enemy
-first sweetheart
-first job
-first dream fulfilled
-first dissappointment suffered
-happiest moment of life adapted from The Famous Writers' School.

(These items could, of course, be easily modified to suit the age-level of students.) The results of this introspection appear on pages 30-31 .[13]

LETTER: Divide the small group into two-sub-groups. The first is to write the letter (e.g. from a con artist who's in jail and is writing to a relative to ask for help in escaping.) The second group is to take the role of the receiver and to write a reply in formal, business letter form.

The activity is, obviously, ideal for the practice of letter forms with the addition of an enjoyable stimulus.[13]

POEMS FROM PICTURES: The group first peruses a set of photographs, pictures cut from magazines or posters. One is chosen. A poem, in any form, is then composed, based on the visual stimulus, the picture. A time limit of ten minutes is given for the writing. Choral reading of the outcome culminates the activity (see example, page 32-33).[13]

GROUP PHOTOS: The teacher, or group leader, warns the participants that he/she will be taking instant photographs of the groups. They are to decide upon how to pose for the shot in order to best illustrate their group's personality.

The group photo is later pasted on a large sheet of oaktag. Around it are written (or drawn) the group's "favorite food", "Favorite leisure time activity" and so on. Posters are centrally displayed for all to enjoy. From "Teaching Writing Skills Through Peer Evaluation" by Jerome Magna.

This an other group activities serve to take pressure off of individuals who need, at times, the security of the group. Group members actually "teach" each other, by tactfully dismissing certain suggestions while using others. The social skills of positive interaction and cooperation are reinformed in group activities.

An Objective Tree for a Writing Program

PROGRAM GOAL

Help Each Pupil Be An Effective Writer

Why / How — What

District-wide Goals

Pre—Writing Process — **Composing Process** — **Editing Process**

Program Objectives

Idea Development	Audience	Purpose	Format Structure	Organization	Style	Mechanics	Holistics
Experience	Teacher	Test	Sentence Variety	Introduction	Light	Grammar	Clear
Knowledge	Class	Answer Questions	Paragraph	Purposes	Humorous	Tense	Correct
Information	Self	Homework	Poem	Main Points	Serious	Punctuation	Concise
Perceptions	Principal	Tell Story	Essay	Details	Persuasive	Spelling	Complete
Feeling	Parents	Offer Opinions	Song	Subordinating	Sentence Variety	Sentence Structure	Coherent
Attitude	Friends/Family	Persuade	Editorial	Logic	Verse	Other	Cogent
Concerns	Editors	Explain	Report	Conclusion	Narrative		Cohesive
Other	Advertisers	Report	Article	Summary	Interview		
	Gov't. Agencies	Place Order	Diary	Other	Vocabulary		
	Utilities	Complain	Fable		Other		
	Other	Record Thought	Other				
		Inquire					
		Other					

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

For each item in the section above, the teacher may develop instructional objectives and lessons or units to implement instruction.

Created by Ken Kahn
Coordinator of the Curriculum Center
Dutchess County BOCES

WRITING

THE RESEARCHERS SPEAK

WHAT IS WRITING?

"Articulation" is what Martha King calls this phase of the composing process. This putting of thoughts on paper is a "complex, psychological process" which includes many factors or "strategies" such as choice of language, of style, of substance, of tone and of audience. These, King says, will depend on the individual writer and his purpose as well as his intended audience. Even more importantly, perhaps, they will depend upon the social context in which he writes.[9]

Donald Graves comments that the process of writing is a way of "analyzing and synthesizing information" and sometimes of coming to terms with traumatic experiences--of seeing them objectively--of coming to a "deeper and clearer understanding" through successive drafts.[4]

Consider the case of six-year-old Sarah, who wrote and illustrated a book about a girl whose night light was an essential source of security during the dark bedtime hours. A villain appeared in this young writer's second drawing-and the light was broken. Disaster? No. The last three sentences of the book were, "She punched him. She's so glad. She's asleep."[10]

In fact, young Sarah was herself acutely fearful of the dark and attempted, maybe even succeeded in, conquering this phobia through writing.

We can see that an assigned topic, no matter how supposedly "relevant", would not have had the impact that Sarah's freely chosen theme--the villain in the dark--had upon her.

Graves contends that children just don't need externally imposed motivation in order to write. He found that when writing is unassigned, the finished product is longer than that produced in an assigned task. Requiring much of the assigned variety inhibits the range, content and amount of writing done by children.

Graves also found definitive sex related differences in writing behavior. Girls, he found, write longer pieces in any situation than do boys. Boys wrote more unassigned works, probably because of the incentive of independently chosen topics.

When unassigned, topics chosen by boys were further removed from the home and school themes more often used by girls. Girls did show increased use of pre-thinking. organization and illustration. Boys seemed more concerned with neatness, spacing and handwriting.

The boy is usually a "reactive" writer, one who has no sense of audience, does little rereading or review (although he does much prewriting) and employs poor reasoning during self-evaluation.

The "reflective" writer, usually a girl, does comparatively little pre-writing, displays a sense of audience, rereads and edits and displays maturity of reasoning during self-evaluation.[3]

READING--DOES IT AFFECT WRITING OR VICE VERSA?

Common sense would indicate that the prolific reader would have an edge on writing over the non-reader. Modelling of good writing as well as experiential gain would benefit the student writer.

Researchers currently, however, prefer to think that writing can, and should, precede reading so that children will know, as Glenda Bissex says, that when they do attempt to read, they're not looking at some random arrangement of letters. "They know what's involved because they've written."[11]

The first impulse of the child, states Donald Durrell, is to write, not read. Writing is an active pursuit, reading passive. The value of active, "hands-on" experiences for children has long since been established. In fact, Durrell sees writing as an aid to reading and reading comprehension.

Should the child's first reading matter be that which he has written? This claim is being increasingly established.

Practice in writing also helps in mathematics, especially in the solving of word problems. If students are permitted to write their own math problems for their peers to solve. the learning will be increased.

The emphasis on spelling is misplaced, Graves says. Spelling will improve through extensive writing, if students are free to experiment without fear of reprisal for misspelling (see INVENTED SPELLING, pg. 19)[4]

TEACHER STRATEGIES

The research on specific, non-generalized teacher-techniques is nearly non-existent. But, what research there is indicates a definitive effect of teacher personality and behavior on writing. Student writers who were considered successful spoke of their teachers as easy-going, friendly and kind, indicating once again that the warm, supportive environment produces not only willing writers, but good ones.

Students need role models for their writing as they do in so many areas of their behavior. Graves and other researchers suggest that the teacher write occasionally with the students and share that writing with them.[4]

Walshe, too, advocates teacher modelling so that students will not feel they're writing in a vacuum with no purpose in the real world.[14]

In any case, what is encouraged should be expression, not perfection. The teacher who stresses the message and considers the mechanics secondary will encounter happy, more prolific writers.

In Graves' "Process-Conference Approach" (see PRE-WRITING, page 4), teacher-student interviews go on throughout the writing stage. The student is likely to be the one who asks questions about organizing his store of knowledge. The teacher continues to offer unobtrusive guidance,. Redrafting is done when the student, who feels close to his work, wishes to make changes.[4]

Many teachers find that the use of journal writing is helpful in getting students to express themselves. In this form, personal experience is a must and free topic choice is key. Editing and redrafting this type of writing is not necessary. Journal writing is, rather, a sort of exercise of "muscle toner", used to prepare the writer for other activities to come.

Young children, those who would have trouble with the introspection entailed in journal writing, can be offered a constant supply of "blank books". Susan Sowers wrote of a public school classroom in New Hampshire in which the teacher had set out a pile of these pre-stapled, six-page volumes. Students were required to write in them daily. When an entire book was finished, it was brought to the teacher for a conference.

Children in this room chose their own topics. They often chose their own time to write. At the sound of the recess bell, not all the children rushed outside. One of two remained in the writing space, proudly adding embellishment to their masterpieces.

THE CASE STUDIES

LET THE CHILDREN TELL US

The writing of the young child is, at first, lacking in the conformities and conventions of standard language. Handwriting, for instance, is a component linked to development and therefore one in which teachers cannot expect perfection too soon. There is no need to ever expect perfect penmanship in a child's first written drafts. No professional writer cares that his initial scrawls are illegible to everyone but himself.

The child's early writing may have many speech-like, "prosodic" features in it, Donald Graves says. Words may run together in print, much as they are heard when the youngster speaks about his subject. They may "undulate" across the page, the print rising and falling as does the spoken message.[5]

Calkins notes that, at first, children may simply print words larger and darker when they wish them to be emphasized when read. Only later, will they acquire the conventions of punctuation that will "correctly" produce the same results.[1]

Spacing may also be a problem for the beginning writer, although he does not perceive it as such. The child, in his egocentricity, assumes that his message will be understood. Often the writer runs out of space on a line, or the page, when the message is not yet complete. Solutions to this dilemma of space to write in may be confusing to the reader. Children must be shown the writer's ploys for indicating additions to their tests. They must then be encouraged to rewrite.

INVENTED SPELLING

Over seventy years ago, Maria Montessori noticed that preschoolers in Rome who could not yet read were writing nonetheless. Given Durrell's premise that the child's first impulse is to write, Montessori's observation is not surprising, especially when we consider that this "writing" she saw may have been undecipherable to most adults.

Researchers like Susan Sowers have likewise observed real writing being done by children much younger than those ordinarily considered well-prepared for the process. The text may look odd at first glance, but the message is there. Consider first-grade Kevin's topic sentence:

"Ains r mvn in a bld and ther wra insid and ot."

Gibberish? Does the child need special help on the basis of this ellegible script? His teacher does not believe so. Kevin reads the sentence ("Ants are moving in a building and they are inside and out.") to her, and she writes it down in conventional spelling so as to remember the message accurately. Kevin's entire story about ants shows thought, originality, imagination and sequencing. It's far from perfect but it's also far more than six-year-olds have typically been credited with.[11]

Kevin and others like him are able to write because of the "invented spelling" they use. Invented spelling lifts the restrictions and eliminates the train-of-thought interruptions that would occur if perfect spelling were required.

Sowers has found that children don't need those seasonal and topical word lists so generously supplied by teachers. These beginning writers feel comfortable spelling as they sound out. They write more and their writing is diverse, without that "carbon copy" sameness that vocabulary lists can foster.

Invented spelling is new every time. The same word will be spelled differently each time it is used.

By allowing such unconventional spelling, is the teacher neglecting to stress the basics? "Parents don't worry about errors when a child learns to talk," Sowers contends, "but they worry about errors in writing too early. Invented spelling gives young writers early power."[11]

THE MATURING WRITER

The older child (eight years or so) will attempt to conform to the conventions of spelling and writing. He begins to show the ability to divorce himself from his writing and to read it through the eyes of the audience. This is apparent in: increased neatness, choice of a 'popular' topic, desire to be correct and to please the audience.

Even at the high school level, though, teachers express difficulty with getting students to remove themselves from their writing--to see the abstract.

Mina Shaughnessy, in a dialogue with teachers of high school students, said that at that age, children may be made aware of the intentional structuring, the non-accidental ploys and techniques, that good writers use. When students see that professional writers pursue their craft deliberately, they can begin to take control of their own writing structures.

High schoolers, too, Shaughnessy said, need to learn that there is a way of saying anything. Too often, they strive to defend only the answer or opinion they feel is the accepted one. They need to come to the realization that through "craftiness and craft" any point can be taken--and defended.[6]

WRITING SAMPLES

On the following pages, actual written works done by participants in the Summer 1981 Workshop appear. They are based on the activities outlined in the pre-writing section of this manual.

The Graves Model for pre-writing was discussed on page 3. Following the steps shown, each partner is to do a "scribble draft" which is read to the other, commented upon, revised, rewritten and edited.

Examples of adult "scribble drafts" follow:

THE GYPSY MOTH AND INFINITY

When I first heard about infinity, I was told that infinity is a number larger than any number you can think of. My college math professor exclaimed that this was a stupid definition, because if you say, "a number larger than you can think of", you are already thinking of it. He insisted on the definition: Infinity is a very large number. That was perhaps more accurate, but somehow infinity had lost its romance and mystery.

After fighting gypsy moths this summer, the concept of infinity is no longer a mystery. I have an accurate image indeibly impressed on my mind.

We resorted to putting gypsy moth tape around our most prized trees, and in the early evening my husband and I scraped off the caterpillars into coffee cans containing hot, soapy water. We would fill several cans in just a few minutes every evening. On some trees, the caterpillars were so thick, we could not see the tree bark.

When we realized the special moth tape was too expensive, we used ordinary masking tape on which I spread my own concoction--vaseline mixed with castor oil. It was messy but it was cheap and it worked.

Every evening from mid-May until the first week in July, we collected caterpillars. It became an obsession. A dinner out left us both with a missing feeling as if I'd left the iron on or forgotten to lock the door. No, it was just that we had not collected gypsy moths that

evening.

Later, we even collected pupae but we were astounded at the density of the adult moths when they hatched. How many caterpillars and pupae could we have missed? Now we're scraping the egg masses from the trees.

Remember the book One, Two, Three, Infinity? I prefer Egg, Caterpillar, Pupae, Moth, Infinity!

Helen Della Volpe

****

ADDICTIONS

One develops many addictions in the course of life. From early on, in trying to fulfill basic needs, certain methods of survival become more pleasurable than others. How quickly the infant squawks when the pacifier drops to the ground.

Pacifiers, are those not what addictions are? The cherry cola after the traumatic teenage argument, the raiding of the refrigerator to appease a familial upset, the cigarettes to calm the nerves before facing an unnerving task. Then each pacifier bacomes the placebo which helps one over the hurdles again and again. Hence, the development of addictions.

Are addictions able to be classified? Is there such a thing as a good addiction? How often society condemns the alcoholic, fashion ridicules the food addict and the AMA berates the smoker. What these "criticism addicts" neglect to consider is that we are all addicted to life and in order to survive, we latch on to whatever temporary addictions we need to realize that ultimate addiction.

Pattie Sherman

****

TRAVELING WITH CHILDREN

If you have never had the opportunity to have ice pops dripping down your back, fingers messing your hair and your husband yelling at you, you've never traveled. You leave home with the best intentions. The suitcases have been carefully packed taking into account space, activities and weather. After much haranguing with these matters, you're off.

Over the river and through the woods and down the Thruway we go. Then comes the first infamous statement from the peanut gallery, "When are we going to get there?" (That's after only fifteen minutes.) More thruways, toll-booths and our second-favorite statement, "I have to go to the bathroom." Then the friction begins and my husband's tirade starts. Amidst his cries of, "Didn't I tell you to take care of that?" and the victim's, "I can't help it!", the hours pass.

Oh, the joys of traveling! Selecting restaurants that the children will like (of course, they must serve hot dogs and hamburgers), playing car games and singing traveling songs until our journey ends.

As we all bound out of the car and see the beach in front of us, thoughts of the trip pass. The only discouraging thought that fleets across my mind is that of the trip home.

Linda Hart

BUILDING THE COMPOST PILE

The compost pile is that hideous, aromatic tangle that is hidden from visitors and neighbors, yet which is the heartbeat of the garden and source of beauty and life in the yard. From it comes the material which will feed flowers and vegetables, bushes and trees. It is the raw material from which spring roses, melons and oaks.

To start a simple pile, an enclosure that will allow free movement of air and water is needed. Chicken wire, sheet metal with holes or even an old trash can might be used for a small pile.

Place into this enclosure any organic discards from the garden or the ditchen, with the exception of meat. Grass clippings will provide the greatest bulk of material in the pile. In the Fall, leaves make a good addition. Neighbors and even strangers will galdly let you haul away some of these.

To maintain the rotting process, add layers of manure from time to time. Most farmers will be happy to allow you to clean out stalls or farm yards to obtain this. Between the layers of organic matter, add layers of garden soil. Not only does this help build better soil, but also makes the pile more compatible with the neighborhood.

Last, the most important ingredient in any compost pile is hard work.

Roy E. Lane

CONTEMPLATION ON ALLERGIES

During the month of June, I join with my colleagues in couting down the last days of school. Although I look forward to the much-needed vacation, the thought of the oncoming, pollen-filled season also causes much fear and anxiety. I am one to the lucky few who wrestle with that pollen dust emitted by all kinds of plants.

The pollen season starts as early as April but April, May, June and July are mere overture to a symphony which builds to a resounding crescendo by August and September. It is then that goldenrod reaches its peak. The classic symptoms of sneezing, wheezing and watery eyes take second place to foul temper and either intense fatigue or annoying insomnia.

Every year I insist that these symptoms can be overcome by the "mind over matter" method. If I approach the second half of the calendar year with a positive attitude, I too will be spared the annoyances of my malady. But, so far, even the best of intentions have not heoped at all.

So, as I pop the third set of little, blue pills and take a hit on my inhaler, I tell myself how lucky I really am. In the divine plan of life, surely those of us who are so sensitive must be the "chosen" people.

Leslie Leventhal

After such "scribble drafts", the following checklists might be considered:

-Have you written a beginning which will make the reader turn the page?
-Does one paragraph flow to another paragraph in a logical order?
-Do you have a consistent point of view?
-Do you have an appropriate tone?
-Does your subject fit the limitations of the form you have chosen?
-Should you change your subject?
-Should you change your form?

WHEN YOU REWRITE:

-Do you have a structure that stands up to a critical reading?
-Does everything belong in the piece?
-Does each part of the piece fit into the next part?
-Do the parts add up to the conclusion you want to emphasize?
-Are you being honest?
-Is your conclusion different from what you expected?
-Should you change your subject?
-Should you change your structure?

Courtesy: Writing Laboratory U.W. Stevens Point

Flax's five-step story outline was described on page 9 . The following piece was written by a group, in accordance with the sequential guidelines given:

REUNION

Carl Carruthers woke, as had become his custom, at 4:30. For thirty years he had been humiliated by others, friends included, for being fat. This new body [illegible]is pleased him. Running early every morning had helped him to finally look human.

Still, the idea of the impending school reunion caused him to break out in a cold sweat. Would his classmates accept the new Carl? They had surely not appreciated him before, what with the unending "fat jokes". Even the reunion invitation had been sent to "Chubbs" Carruthers. What would they say when he faced them in two weeks.

The selection of the proper clothes was a dilemma. Carl's new body demanded a new, up-to-date outfit. He was unaccustomed to such a wide selection of items to choose from. Before, he'd been limited to only one or two tent-like garments. With the help of an overly eager salesperson, the choice of gray blazer and navy slacks was finally accomplished.

Finally the day arrived. As he drove to the reunion, many thoughts raced through Car's head. Would he be recognized? Would he be accepted? Would he have to spend the time alone as he was so used to doing?

A very attractive woman, who Card vaguely remembered, met him as he pulled up to the curb. "Is that really you, Chubbs?", she asked. "How wonderful you look."

Carl realized that some things stay with you forever.

****

The "if" interview appeared on page 12. Follwoing is the writing phase of that activity, a description of the interviewee, based on her conclusions to the "if" sentences.

There was a happy moment during the summer workshop when Elizabeth filled in the incomplete "if" statements. Afterwards, came the chance that I would know something about this teacher who sat across the table from me.

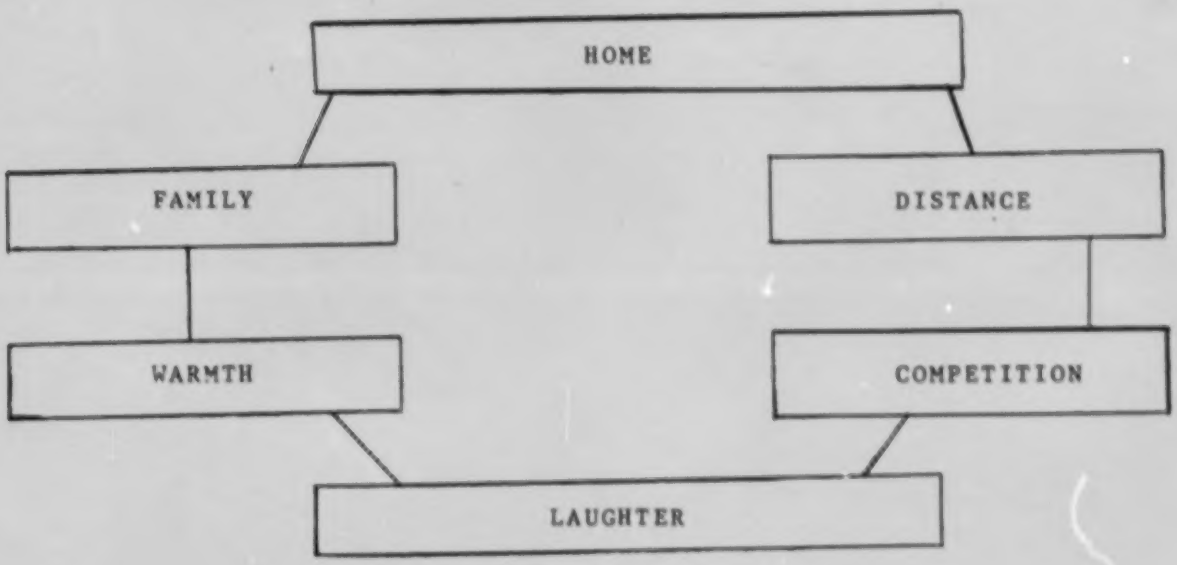
Elizabeth, a staunch Republican, would love to spend a day with President Reagan, eat French food and read an historical novel.

An unexpected surpirse for Elizabeth would be a vacation trip to some special place in Australia. Go! Go! Go!

Harriet Jacobs

****

The Associative Thinking diagram (see page 12) might have been filled in like this:



A follow-up paragraph, combining all the words associated with home, is then written:

HOME

Home is more a concept than a place. Home is family, even if that means just two of us. Home is happy and sad, warmth of laughter and cool of competition. Home is best appreciated, like most things, from a distance.

MEB

****

The usefulness of visual stimuli as writing motivators was discussed on page 13. Workshop participants wrote freely what they felt and thought of as they looked at a vase of wildflowers. The Queen Anne's Lace, the chicory and loosestrife stirred touching, sometimes funny, memories in all.

***

The time is 1967. I am sixteen years old, standing in a field outside my dorm room at college. Flower child that I am, I wear my ceremonial clothes--a tie-dyed simulated Victorian lace dress, a crown of chicory flowers and, incongruously, Mondrian-inspired geometric eye makeup. (This is the sixties, after all.)

My boyfriend, with hair longer than mine and flowers in his, too, bends down to pick some loosestrife. His ankle bells jingle in time to the song (Michael From Mountains", which plays continuously all through this summer of love and peace.

We are going to a wedding. The bride, five months pregnant and dressed in hippie-best, has requested that her old boyfriend (my current flame) and I (her maid-of-honor) bring wildflowers to symbolize growth, freedom and individuality. The ceremony, held high atop a mountain crag, is presided over by a nervous minister from the small town below. He has been made an offer he can't refuse by the bride's panicky father. The couple has made up their own ceremony to augment the traditional "I do's".

Afterwards, the barefoot wedding party and polyester-clad guests adjourn to a local restaurant for hors d'oevres, cake and unscheduled enterainment by the local street musician who thinks the whoe idea of a wedding is "groovy, man", especially the food part.

K. Roe

****

In a large backyard plot behind our house, a spring exists. Ten years ago, the overflow from the spring was disturbed, and the property became wet and marshy. As a result, the most beautiful wildflowers grew. The yard was transformed from a jungle of sumac and weeds to a haven for red-winged blackbirds and frogs.

One of the beautiful flowers which grew was purple loosestrife. It mixed well with tall, spiky cattails. I never tired of gazing out our back windows to see the birds fly from one lovely area of the yard to another. It was my special sanctuary.

Two things occurred to change the condition of the backyard. One, I married a man who loved to mow grass! and two, the spring no longer overflowed. The lovely loosestrife and the brave cattails were cut down by my ambitious, tractor-driving man. The birds and frogs fled to another sanctuary. Now I view from my back windows a well-groomed, green lawn. It's sad!

P. Loeber

****

We hadn't wanted to come, really, my husband and I. At our age, wedding receptions had somehow lost their appeal. Perhaps they reminded us that we were nearing the end and perhaps this made us resentful and uncomfortable, even jealous.

And then I saw them, standing proudly in their vase. Tall, stately purple flowers, even taller branches of chicory with their small, full flowers and Queen Anne's Lace in all its buxom splendor. There they were, overshadowing the appetizing delicacies around them.

Was it that long ago I used to wander in the fields, collecting these beauties to adorn the dinner table together with shining candlesticks and bright napkins?

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever", wrote Keats. Suddenly the past merged with the present and, as with all things lovely, would I knew, continue into the future.

Marion B. Petty

***

MAGENTA LOOSESTRIFE

Dutchman's children, have you been told of how your ancestors sailed from Rotterdam a hundred years before the first shot was fired at Concord? Spires of magento wept nectar tears in the Netherland polders as they nodded farewell to the Van Tassells, the Elmendorfs, Van Keurens and Kips.

A half-century ago this purple loosestrife joined your ancestors here in the Hudson Valley. Its seeds rode on a steamship in the pocket of a professor and were sprinkled in the wetlands of Ulster County.

Dutchman's children, will you, in some far-off place-remember to tell your children of how loosestrife nodded its spires at the towering, dusky pink Joe Pye weed? Van Steenberghs, Dykemans, Osterndorffs and Van Ettans, tell

them of how it was gathered by those Dutchman's decendents on both sides of the Hudson River.

Doris Hatschek

****

THE EXECUTIONER

Since Uncle Seth was on the county Board of Trustees and Cousin James ran the local Agway, I was a shoo-in to get the job. Uncle Seth was the one who gave it the title "Executioner". He loved flowers.

My contract was with the County of Erie and the area was Route 5 from Angola to the PA border. It was a long run and distasteful to me, but necessary. So with my father's tractor and side shears attached, I began the march of the grim reaper. With caution lights blinking above the familiar triangle that all such machines must display, I lowered my chomping, multi-toothed, mechanical sword into a breathtaking display of wild daisies.

The slaughter was repeated with hosts of hollyhocks, legions of Queen Anne's Lace and whole armies of tiger lilies. On I drove, mile after depleting mile, and down they fell, victims of a safety factor, a tribute to our time.

Bernie Lyons

A composite group autobiography, according to the plan outlined on page , might result in the following, diverse narrative.

*****

Around the room I went, proudly showing everyone the best handwriting in the first grade. Each one had to examine my notebook by order of Miss Jones. What a delight!

I remember not being able to tie my shoes. I was bending down in the classroom aisle trying to accomplish this remarkable feat. How the teacher and my classmates stared! "I thought you were nice, Chris!", scolded my first grade teacher. My heart was pounding madly--my shame had been revealed.

I was all of seven and in the third grade. There was only one person taller than myself and so on that qualification alone, this lanky gawk became my first sweetheart. My heartthrob could never make the ball team. After all, he couldn't even climb the ladder from our barn roof. He was good natured, though. Didn't he take a bite of the quince when I told him it would be sweet and delicious? Naturally, he was bright and could help me with my corrections. I wonder why he has never married?

My childhood environment consited of an older sibling, two younger sets of twins, the baby and Andrew. Cathy was the oldest, Homer the baby, and everyone else was a twin. I assumed that Andrew and I were twins because I knew we weren't either the oldest or the youngest and so we just had to be twins. The fact that I was second in birth order and he was seventh wasn't taken into account at all.

The harsh reality of the situation was revealed to me on the day of a big, family gathering. My mother was introducing us to Aunt Kate, "And here is my oldest, Cathy, and the baby, Homer. My twins here are Sue and Lee, Mike and Mary Jo. And here are the other two, Andrew and Chris."

Other two? Not "other twins"? How could she make such a mistake? I let it pass until that night when my mother told me once and for all that I was not a twin.

My first enemy was a Great Dane. He was surely the biggest dog every born. I remember that dog as almost having ruined my life. During my first year of teaching, I had to walk out to the end of the street I lived on to get to the main road. Just at the end of my street, lived "The Monster". The first day I saw him, I stopped--he stopped. I started to walk-he started to walk. Finally, in desperation, I opened my lunch bag and while he hungrily gulped down my bologna sandwich, I quickly ran the rest of the way to the bus stop. This went on day after day. Each day I made two sandwiches, one for myself and one for the Great Dane.

Roy Lane, Carolyn Keator,
Mary Martin, et al

The "con letter" and response, described on page 13, was interpreted in this way:

****

Cell Block 4C, Sing Song
Prison
Anytown, N.Y.
July 13, 1981

Dear Uncle Frank,

Although I realize your Las Vegas schedule doesn't permit you much time for corresponding, I am writing to you as a last resort! As you can see from the above address, my accommodations are not presently up to "family" standards. My "spacious" quarters (6 x 8') simply don't allow room for the pool, stable and croquet lawn I'm accustomed to. The cuisine leaves a lot to be desired, the air conditioning is non-existent and the color t.v. only has a twelve inch screen.

As you surely recall, prior to my unexpected confinement, I made those "investments" for your firm. As a man of honor and outstanding virute, I'm sure you will oblige as I call in a return on those investments. Please make all the necessary arrangements to have the company chopper hovering over the requetball court in the activity yard next Tuesday at 9:45 A.M.

Thank you in advance for your family loyalty.

Lovingly,

Cousin Louie

******

MGM Grand
Las Vegas, Nevada
July 32, 1981

Cell Block 4C
Sing Song Prison
Anytown, New York 00000

Dear Mr. Capone:

In response to your letter of July 13, 1981, I regret to inform you that the investments, although lucrative, have fallen short of the anticipated five million dollar return. As a result we have had to make adjustments in our special projects.

Accommodations here have also been altered. We are all tightening the belt a bit and pulling in the purse strings. "The Company" sincerely wishes you well in your endeavor and regrets that it can offer no assistance at the present time.

Sincerely,

Francis Albert

******

Finally, the Poems from Pictures activity (page 14) resulted in the choral reading of a cinquain. The pictorial stimulus, though difficult to visualize, was a photograph of a series of cylindrical chimneys which looked like a throng of extraterrestrial beings descending upon the rooftops.

INVADERS:

ILLUMINATED, RANKED

MARCHING, DISIPLINED, THREATENING

RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!

ILLUSION.

POST WRITING

THE RESEARCHERS SPEAK

DEFINITION AND TECHNIQUES

Martha King defines this stage of the composing process as the revision and shaping of the written piece to better fulfill the author's purpose.[9]

Tway advocates the establishment of a set of criteria to tell us what is really involved in good writing. This, and research in improved measuring techniques, is needed so that teaching styles and strategies can be better assessed in terms of pupil growth.[12]

Donald Graves continues to suggest that the interview process be used in this third writing phase. Through careful questioning, the teacher can gain insight into the child's view of what constitutes good writing for himself and his peers.[4]

Research indicates at this stage, as at the other stages in the process, that teacher support and acceptance are essential. Teachers' comments on children's work which include a mixture of praise and criticism, with praise dominating, produced confident, happy writers. In fact, Walshe calls praise simply "confidence-building".[14]

Students who received positive comments on their work wrote more mature sentences than those who were given no comments or negative ones. Therefore, contends Haynes, "Intensive correction of errors is futile."[9]

During this editing and rewriting stage, skills and conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.) are cultivated. Walshe says that this should be done "specifically and individually" or with small groups, if called for, but not in whole-class lectures when drill of the isolated skill may not be applicable to a large percentage of the students.[14]

WRITING FOLDERS

In the research of Donald Graves and his colleagues, writing folders are being kept by all children involved, for the purposes of providing background data which will allow the researcher to view the writing of individuals with greater objectivity, i.e. as compared to other written samples done by the same child at other times or that done by his peers. The keeping of folders also helps to assess general writing habits of children in terms of writing frequency, length, theme, accompanying illustrations and the like.

For many of the same reasons, the experts advocate the use of writing folders in all classrooms. Haynes points out that such a collection of student writing samples would allow for careful evaluation and development of a select few papers rather than a slipshod correcting of a great many samples.[7]

Such a folder can be functional for both student and teacher. Not every piece of writing merits extensive revision and rewriting. A student might reread his work after every five writing episodes or so, and choose one from this collection of works, one he really cares about, for editing and final drafting. By examining the whole folder, the student can see his own progress.

Cooper even suggests peer sharing of folders so that other students might describe (not grade) an individual's work--perhaps assisting him in making his choice of the paper to revise and rewrite.[2]

Cooper explains how the maintaining of individual writing folders can lead to a fair assessment of student growth. Early in the year, the teacher can diagnose student abilities on the basis of several samples. At this time, grading each piece is not necessary. Then again, at the end of the year, several final drafts will be selected from the folder--by both teacher and student, working together to make the choices. These papers will be used for evaluation and a grade will be assigned--a true measure of the student's growth.[2]

Sheila Schlawin suggests that such folders move on with the student from year to year, guiding each new teacher's instruction in writing, helping to prevent both gaps and needless repetition.

Ms. Schlawin adds that writing folders serve a public relations purpose as well. They are ideal tools and supporting evidence for parent-teacher conferences. They will, when necessary, substantiate the claim that writing is, in fact, being taught.[8]

SELF-EDITING TECHNIQUES

Walshe prefers to process of self-editing to what he calls the "band-aid" approach so often used by red-pencil enthusiasts. Children will probably grumble at first when asked to edit, redraft and rewrite their work. They must be made to feel like real writers, to value their work enough (not every piece, but select ones) to get it as polished as they can.

Later, children will realize that the first draft is often the most difficult--that the refinement stages are, by contrast, easier and more enjoyable (especially if publication of the work is a possibility- see pages 24-25).

The following charts and checklists are tools for students to use when they self-edit:

SELF-EVALUATION CHECKLIST

a. Does it make sense? Is it interesting?
b. Does it have an introduction?
c. Does it have a conclusion?
d. Did I use the most appropriate or interesting words?
e. Did I use any words too often?
f. Do the sentences in a paragraph relate to one idea?
g. Are my sentences varied in length, pattern and beginnings?
h. Do the sentences tell a complete thought?
i. Are capitals used when necessary?
j. Did I use apostrophes, commas, quotation marks, periods, and question marks when necessary?
k. Are all words spelled correctly?
l. Are paragraphs indented?

******

A WRITER'S CHECKLIST (Donald Murray)

1. Do I have anything to say?
2. Do I know what I'm talking about?
3. Is each word necessary and is each word right?
4. Do my sentences have a pleasing and effective variety?
5. Do I have a consistent and appropriate tone?
6. Can the structure of what I have said withstand a reading; that is, does it have a beginning, middle and end?
7. Are the proportions right?
8. Have I been honest?

******

WHEN YOU EDIT:

Does each word do its job?
Does every sentence advance the meaning of the paragraph?
Does every paragraph emphasize the right idea?
Does the entire piece communicate what you have to say with carity and grace?

A WRITER'S CHECKBOARD

developed by: Kathy Kreis
Buffalo. N.Y.

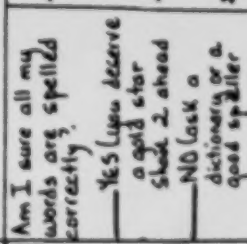
Do I understand the topic or question?
___YES (go two steps ahead)
___NO (go back to find out) clear up confusion

Do I Know the audience I am writing for?
___YES (zoom ahead 2)
___NO (find out) ask someone

GO

Is this my best shot?
YES ___(run it up to teacher's desk)
___NO (bounce it around a while longer.)

Am I sure all my words are spelled correctly?
___YES (you deserve a gold star sheet 2 ahead
___NO (ask a dictionary or a good speller

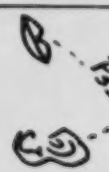


Have I punctuated correctly?
capitals run-ons periods
no fragments
___YES (pat yourself on the back; move 2
___NO (look it up; fix it up)

Will my reader understand me?
___YES (march on 2)
___NO (untangle it)

Are my sentences in the best order?
___YES (bounce on 2)
___NO (try switching them around a bit.)

Read your writing aloud...or aloud in your head.
Does it sound smooth?
___SMOOTH (sail on 2)
___CHOPPY (iron it out)



Do I Know the tone to assume?
___YES (move confidently ahead 2)
___NO (check it out)

WHEN YOU ARE THROUGH:

Do you have to start over again?
Do you see what you should have seen before you started to write?
Should you have chosen a different subject?
Should you have picked a more effective form?
Should you have edited more carefully so that your writing would be more vigorous and more effective?
Do you have to start over again?

From the Writing Lab
U.W. Stevens Point

PEER EDITING

The "buddy system", as in the pre-writing and writing stages, is effective during post-writing. Students can read their own work aloud to one or a group of peers who will then help the writer summarize and edit the work.

Mina Shaughnessy, recommends peer interaction at the post-writing level for high school students.[6] After their final drafts are done and ready for scrutiny, the material is written on ditto masters, duplicated and distributed to the class. The reading of this peer writing is considered a mandatory assignment.

Another theory holds that a classmate may review and edit writing for others BEFORE the teacher sees the work. The teacher directs the writer to another student reviewer who has already demonstrated mastery of the skill in question.

"One effective system involves the use of a teacher-made device much like a wall-mounted, cloth shoe-holder. Each pocket is labeled with the name of a writing skill. The names of students proficient in each skill are written on strips of oaktag and placed in the appropriate pockets. Before handing a paper in to the teacher, the student consults the pocket for the skill on which he is working and has an editing conference with one of those students whose name was in the pocket. Teachers report that even their most skill-deficient students achieve impressive growth through this system."[8]

Of course, peer post-writing systems such as these require a great deal of student training and the enforcement of specific practices by the teacher. The teacher must set limits, instruct students about what to look for in their peers' writing and how to positively comment upon this writing.

Peter Elbow's Model for Peer Evaluation involves the citing of strong, vivid words and phrases in the written work, which is read orally to the group:

1. Divide class into heterogenous groups of 3 to 4 students.
2. First student reads the piece to the rest of the group, who listens to get the flavor of the piece.
3. During second reading, using Elbow's technique of "pointing", students listen for and write down those words or phrases which are strong and "penetrate the skull."
4. After the writer finishes the reading, the group members read the words from their lists in round-robin fashion while the writer listens.
5. Since particularly strong words will have been repeated by members of the group, writer will have a feeling for what has been communicated to the reader.
6. The process is repeated until all students have read and received positive response.
7. Revision of papers, on another day, follows.

****

COMMENT SHEET

(Adapted from Peter Elbow's Writing Without Teachers)

1. Write a sentence in your own words that summarizes the writer's main idea.

_____
_____
_____

2. Select a word used by the writer that best summarizes this writing. _____

3. Give a word of your own that best summarizes this piece of writing._____

4. Which part of this writing was strongest? _____
_____

5. Which part could be improved, and how?_____
_____
_____

The chart below may be helpful to students in proofreading papers written by their peers. Each student editor would be responsible for one section; e.g., spelling or punctuation or paragraphing.

PROOFREADING TECHNIQUES

Proofreading by Consultants and/or Advisors

1. Consultant:_____ COMPLETE SENTENCES

   Comments:

---

2. Consultant:_____ PARAGRAPHS

   Comments:

---

3. Consultant:_____ SPELLING

   Comments:

---

4. Consultant:_____ INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION

   Comments:

---

5. Consultant:_____ PUNCTUATION

   Comments:

---

6. Consultant:_____ CAPITALIZATION

   Comments:

---

7. Consultant:_____ REPEATING WORDS, BEGINNING OF SENTENCES

   Comments:

---

8. Consultant:_____ USING VIVID WORDS-SLOTTING

   Comments:

(This chart is from the curriculum of Bronxville Elementary School)

The Close Test may be used during the revision process. In this technique, the writer completes the first draft of a piece, then counts back from the ending one-hundred words or so. These last sentences are hidden by folding the paper so that only the beginning of the draft is showing.

Next, the hundred-word ending is recopied, replacing every fifth or tenth word in it with a blank line. Then, the original beginning and "new" ending are passed around the group. Each member decides which word he thinks the author has used to fit each blank. Guesses are recorded on a form such as this:

BLANK #	YOUR WORD	READER 3	READER 2	READER 1	HorM +or-
1					
2					
etc.					

The writer's original words are then compared to the guesses. If at least two readers guess correctly, the H or M column gets an H for HIT. Otherwise, it gets M for MISS.

"Explain that both hits and misses can be either "positive" or "negative". Hits are usually positive, signalling readability by fulfilling reader expectations; if they occur in trite expressions, however, they may not be desirable. Misses can be positive, or at least neutral, if the missed word carries important new information or surprises us with its specificity; most misses, however, are negative, signalling such weaknesses as insufficient transition words or the lack of "equivalence chains".

Have students, individually or in groups, analyze their hits and misses and code them as + or - in the last column.

Finally, have students return to their drafts, looking for ways to increase the number of Positive hits and misses."

From: Ken Davis
Idea Exchange
U. of Kentucky
1980

Try applying the Close "Hit or Miss" Technique to this fable. Cover the answers while making your guesses.

THE FOX AND THE CROW

A fox saw a crow with a piece of cheese in his beak. She said to herself, "I want that piece of cheese. And I am going to get it."

So she said to the crow, "1 crow. How really lovely you 2 today. I've never seen 3 so black and shiny. Your 4 is as lovely as a swan's. Your 5 are as strong as an eagle's. Too bad you can't 6 very well."

The crow, pleased with the fox's 7, wanted to prove that he could sing. He 8 the first note and the cheese dropped. The fox 9 it up at once.

As she trotted off, the fox 10 back, "Thanks for the cheese! Nowhere is some good 11 for you. Don't trust a flatterer!"

An Aesop's Fable

ANSWERS:

1. Hi
2. look
3. feathers
4. neck
5. wings
6. sing
7. praise
8. cawed
9. grabbed
10. yelled
11. advice

TEACHER EDITING AND COMMENTING

No, it isn't possible to meet with every child to confer about every piece of writing. The system, previously described in these pages, of requiring redrafting of only about on-fifty of the child's written work should take some of this time-management burden from you, the teacher.

An attachment, like the following, is another way to solve the problem. It can be filled in in just minutes after the writing is perused and it adds a very personal touch to an otherwise cold, red-pencilled process:

*

Dear_____,

I have read with interest the piece of writing you shared with me. I especially like_____
_____.

To make what you are saying even clearer to me, I think you could_____
_____.

Your selection of the words_____, _____, _____ and _____ adds to your writing. I think the words_____ and _____ could be more _____ _____.

The only other suggestion I'd like to make is _ _____.

I hope my comments will help you progress with your writing and that you will help me with mine.

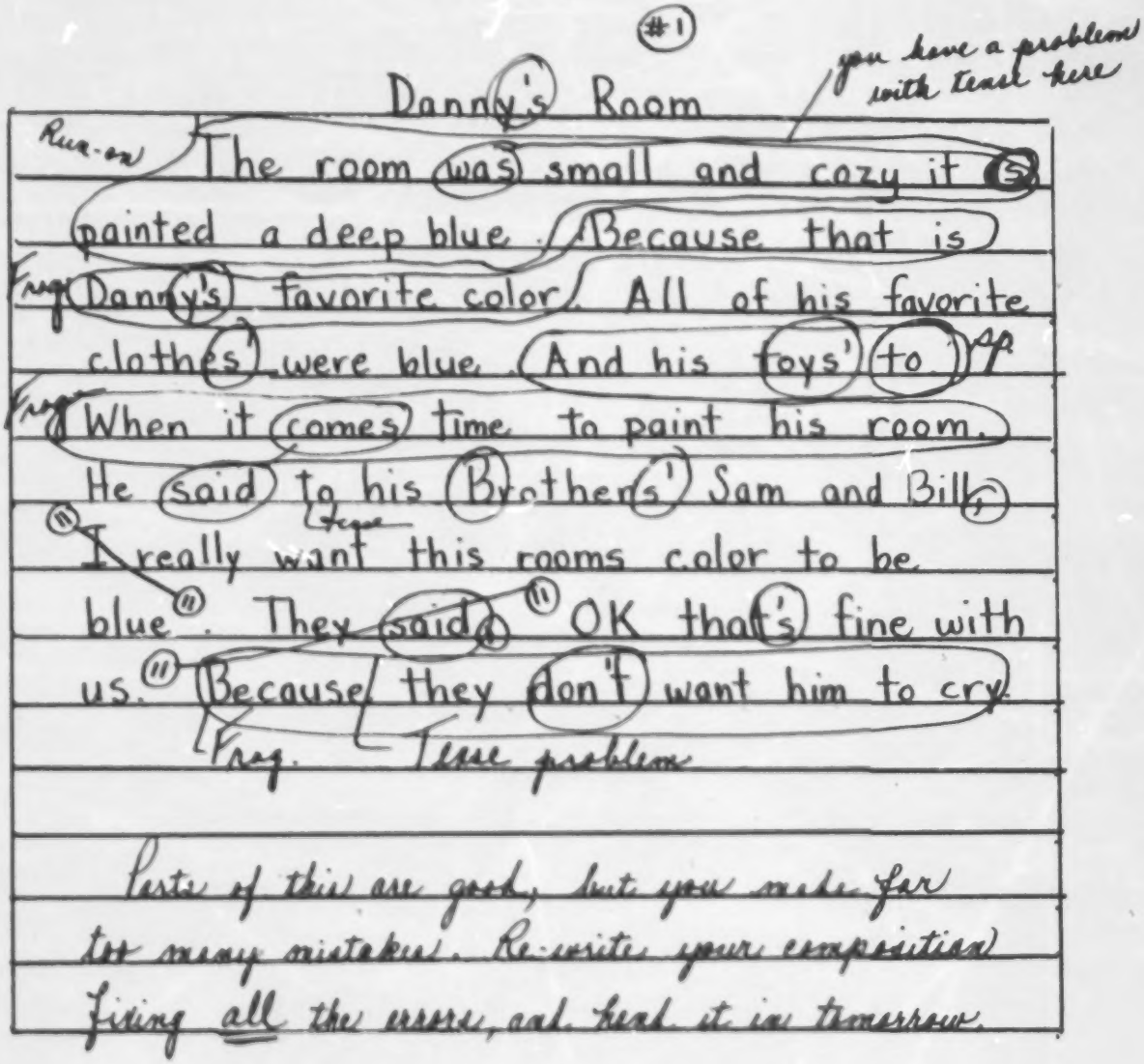
Sincerely,

_____

*Idea from Kathy Kreis, Buffalo Public Schools

Walshe, in his article, "What's Basic to Writing?" tells the teacher to RESPOND to student writing not to just mark it. Consider the message as you would oral communication, which you'd naturally reply and respond to. Add that personal touch whenever you can. Give the child a goal to strive for. Don't cause him to feel that the effort is futile.[14]

Following is a child's original paragraph. It is shown three times, each time with a different teacher's remarks and corrections. Are you one of these teachers? Can you see yourself scoring the paper as any of them did? Which do you think evaluated and remarked upon this paper most effectively? Which strives to build Danny's confidence?


#1
you have a problem with tense here
Danny's Room
Run-on
The room was small and cozy it (S)
painted a deep blue. Because that is
Frag
Danny's favorite color. All of his favorite
clothes' were blue. And his toys' to
Frag
When it comes time to paint his room.
He said to his Brothers' Sam and Bill,
I really want this rooms color to be
blue". They said, "OK that's fine with
us." Because they don't want him to cry.
Frag. Tense problem
Parts of this are good, but you made far
too many mistakes. Re-write your composition
fixing all the errors, and hand it in tomorrow.

#2

Dannys Room

The room was small and cozy it is painted a deep blue. Because that is Dannys favorite color. All of his favorite clothes' were blue. And his toys' to. When it comes time to paint his room. He said to his Brothers' Sam and Bill I really want this rooms color to be blue... They said OK thats fine with us. Because they don't want him to cry.

Nice job! Watch those careless mistakes.

Dannys Room (#3)

The room was small and cozy it is painted a deep blue. Because that is Dannys favorite color. All of his favorite clothes' were blue. And his toys' to. When it comes time to paint his room. He said to his Brothers' Sam and Bill I really want this rooms color to be blue. They said OK thats fine with us Because they don't want him to cry.

A number of things about this paper are very good, especially your use of detail. I've circled your sentence fragments. Please see me today for a conference about writing complete sentences.

Excessive correcting as seen in Danny's paper #1 is futile. The child who is bombarded with negative stimuli, whose message is violated so completely, has no hope of pleasing or succeeding in this activity.

Should the teacher then simply apply an emblem or sticker to the piece of work and write some catch-all phrase as in example #2? This ploy does no good either, for though the child will be encouraged rather that dissuaded from writing, he will receive no "agenda" for growth. He will obviously continue to make the same kinds of errors, since no one has pointed them out to him.

Example #3 shows teacher response which clearly and deliberately focuses upon just one type of error. This single stimulus can be focused on by the writer, while it does not bombard him.

Later, in future writings, the student will have occasion to focus upon other areas of weakness as his teacher points them out to him.

Just as we do not attempt to teach the child to add, subtract, multiply and divide all in the same lesson, neither should we try to overcome several writing deficiencies in a single sitting.

The content and purpose of teacher responses should be broad and varied. Too often, they are simply "band aids" slapped upon the misspellings, punctuation errors and grammatical mistakes. Use this tally sheet to see how varied YOUR comments are. Each comment should be marked both under a focus area and a purpose area.

#	FOCUS OR CONTENT OF RESPONSE:
____	1. Comments on the ideas: their richness, soundness, clarity and relevance.
____	2. Comments on mechanical and grammatical skills: sentence structure, punctuation, spelling, English usage.
____	3. Comments on organization.
____	4. Comments on language: wording, phrasing, vocabulary, choice and arrangement of words.
____	5. Comments on creativity or flavor: style, individuality, originality, intent, sincerity, voice.
____	6. Reader response: personal responses of the teacher as an interested reader.
____	7. Response of teacher as an assessor of student ability.
____	8. Other.

#	FOCUS ON PURPOSE OF RESPONSE:
____	1. Positive feedback: pointing out something to praise it.
____	2. Negative feedback: pointing out an error or something poor.
____	3. Corrective feedback: pointing out an error and explaining why it is wrong; offering suggestions.

STUDENT RESPONSE

"Teachers can examine the effectiveness of the comments written on student papers by using a questionnaire. Staple this to each composition in a set at least once a term. Request that students read the teacher's comments and answer the questions in relation to this paper only. Students return both their compositions and the filled-in questionnaire."

1. What comments, if any, were especially helpful in showing you ways to work on your writing or showing you things that were successful in your writing? Why?

2. Were there any comments that you disagreed with? Why?

3. Were there any comments that bothered you? Why?

4. Were there any comments that pleased you? Why?

5. Was there anything in your paper that you expected me to notice or hoped I would notice that I didn't respond to?

6. Were there any comments that you didn't understand?

7. Were there any comments that were valueless?

8. How do you think I felt about your paper? Does this correspond to the way YOU felt about your paper?

(Lois M. Rosen, in Composing, 1979

PUBLISHING STUDENT' WRITING

In the classroom Susan Sowers visited, children's writing was regularly published, i.e., typed, bound in hard cover and placed in the central library area. Students see, when their teacher goes to such lengths with their work, that they have done something worthwhile.[11]

Teachers have, in typing the stories, special time to think about each of the children who wrote them, and to assess each one's particular needs, whether related to writing or not.

Walshe believes that publishing children's work extends the writing process a step beyond. It closes, finally, the circle begun during pre-writing. What was written is now being read. It has that audience the young writer strove so hard to identify at an earlier time.[14]

HOLISTIC SCORING

The holistic method of evaluating student writing is, as the name implies, a treatment of the whole product rather than a piecemeal, analytical treatment such as that seen on the "Danny's Room" piece on page 43.

In this method, the paper is read and scored on the total effect--on the first impression. The process is done by a scoring team, two or three of who read and score each paper. This is done quickly, allowing only two minutes per paper. If the results of the readers are similar, a score may be assigned. If the results are widely discrepant, the paper is given to another reader who decides the score.

The holistic scoring method leads to a firly accurate assessment of overall student writing ability. Emphasis is usually placed on the strengths of a paper rather than on the errors. Many papers can be scored in a relatively short time.

A disadvantage of Holistic scoring is that, since a single score on the overall effect of a piece of writing is given, there is no opportunity for the evaluator to address specific comments to the writer. The student will not know exactly where he went wrong or where he went "right".

Clearly, some combination of the possible methods of evaluation is needed. The best characteristics of each should be capitalized upon. No single method can be used with all student writing all of the time.

PART TWO

Activities Selected From: Write? Right!

and Teaching Writing Right

Additional Strategies

selected from

WRITE? RIGHT! (1978)

and

TEACHING WRITING RIGHT (1979)

From time to time teachers, supervisors and administrators from Dutchess County and other districts in New York State and other states have asked for copies of WRITE?, RIGHT! and TEACHING WRITING RIGHT.

Because WRITE? RIGHT! has been out of print and its strategies have remained so popular, we have decided to borrow from our previous publications to beef up this year's offering. TEACHING WRITING RIGHT is still available, but a number of strategies seemed appropriate for inclusion, and like chicken soup, "It can't hurt."

The following section departs from the organizational pattern of Part I. Part I deals separately with Pre-writing, Composing and Editing, the writing process, simply because each has to be recognized and addressed. Part II provides an enriched selection of strategies for teaching writing-all its processes. It should provide a refreshing reminder of the great source of materials - newspapers, objects, advertisements, literature, pictures and of course our own interests and bright ideas, so readily available, to help teach writing effectively.

Kenneth K. Kahn

STARTERS

Each day begin with a different short activity which serves to group or pair students, illustrate a point about the use of language, produce a short piece of writing or stimulate discussion.

QUESTIONNAIRES

Personal Scavenger Hunt

Instructions: Find a person in the group who fits each category. Write his or her name in the blank space. See if you can fill in each blank in ten minutes.

1. A person in this group whose birthday falls in the same month as mine is _____.
2. A person in this group who wears the same size shoe as I do is _____.
3. A person in this group whose mother or father is or was a doctor is _____.
4. A person in this group with whom I'd like to get better acquainted is _____.
5. A person in this group who has the same hobby as I do is _____.
6. A person in this group who has recently read the same book as I have is _____.
7. A person in this group who has the same number of brothers and sisters as I do is _____.
8. A person in this group who has lived for 10 years or more in another state is _____.
9. A person in this group whose favorite color is the same as mine is _____.
10. A person in this group who has traveled on vacation in the same area as I have is _____.

When the questionnaire was filled out during the summer workshop, the participants were asked to find the person who had vacationed in the same area, read the same book, or had the same hobby, and together prepare a commercial for the vacation area, book, or hobby, and present the commercial to the entire group.

In the discussion that followed, points were made that:

1. questionnaires could be adapted for use by elementary school children

2. questionnaires and interviews could be used to gather information for research papers

3. information from questionnaires could be tabulated or graphed, thus developing math skills

4. devising good questions is both a thinking and a writing skill

5. either expository or creative writing could follow the use of a questionnaire

6. the writing could be done individually, or in pairs, or in groups

WRITING FROM NEWSPAPERS

ZODIAC

Each pupil is given a card with a symbol drawn on it. Four or five pupils have the same symbol. The class is then told that the symbols designate a new zodiac system. The students who have the same symbol are to find each other, decide on a new name for the symbol, the dates this sign governs, the characteristics of a person born under this sign and advice for that person today.

An example of the delightful results follows:

This sign designates any period between two signs---the cusp. Therefore the name of this sign is the Cuspidor.

Characteristics of Cuspidorians:

Cuspidorians are usually the spitting image of one another.
They are well coordinated.
They always aim high.
They are apt to be very brassy.
They have an uncanny sense of humor.
They can expect to rate highly in intelligence.

Famous People Born Under the Sign of the Cuspidor:

Gabby Hayes
Fu Man Chu
Chou En-lai
Oral Roberts

Favorite Day: Chewsday

Favorite Color: Green

Favorite Food: Enchilada

Favorite Bird: Hawk

Today's Horoscope:

Try not to run at the mouth. Don't get so mad you could spit. Avoid people by the name of Chew. Avoid projects you think you might get you teeth into. Give a donation to the Salvation Army.

Chewly yours,
Dennis J. Hannan

This activity could be used to:
1. promote vocabulary development and word play
2. be varied for younger children by using pictures of animals etc. and asking them to write a description of the story

3. be varied for older children by asking them to devise a zodiac system for the characters in a story or a novel.
4. lead to expository writing on topics associated with astrology
5. lead to an assignment in which students compare their own characteristics with the supposed characteristics of people born under this sign.

LANGUAGE TREASURE HUNT

You are going on a language treasure hunt in the newspaper. Find the following items:

1. 3 nouns
2. 3 verbs
3. 3 adjectives
4. The use of a question mark
5. A typographical error
6. A compound word
7. A word which starts with the letter X
8. A modernized spelling

Mount your findings on a large piece of paper and label.

At the end of the period report on the activity and the language skills involved.

What writing activities could follow:
1. Check students' original work for typographical errors.
2. Class: Function of words - justify nouns as nouns
3. Writing a newspaper article using some given words
4. Learning specific practices of newspapers, such as breaking of words irregularly so as to have even margins.
5. Check previous essays for items on treasure hunt list.
6. Classification: Collect nouns from class and categorize.
7. Make up a modernized vocabulary.
8. Examine headlines to see which appears more often-nouns or verbs.
9. Create your own headlines from given nouns and verbs.

MESSAGES

Objective: To practice the following skills of organization and development-
a. bringing ideas together for coherence
b. choosing appropriate diction

As a group, or individually, devise, using words clipped from the newspaper headlines, a message which tells something about your personality, or an excuse for not grading papers, or a message to your teacher.

One group who did the activity put the message to their administrator in the form of a diamonte:

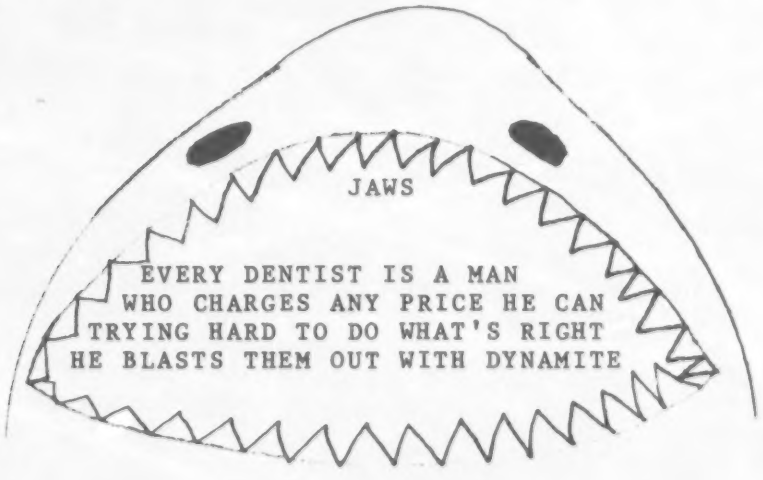
Education
Responsive, Professional
Continuing, Moving, Understanding
Child, Administrator, Teacher, Librarian
Guaranteed, Organized, Revised
Highgrade, Productive
Writers

Poems from a Newspaper

Objectives: To foster vocabulary development
To practice thinking skills of forming associations, forming abstractions, solving problems
To form an interesting statement out of given elements

Divide the class into groups. Clip interesting words from newspaper headlines, medium sized headlines work best. Then, as a group, decide on an arrangement of the words that would make an interesting poem. Do not be too easily satisfied. When you have decided on a final arrangement, paste the words on a large sheet of paper to be read to the rest of the class and displayed. Do more than one if you have time.

One group created the following poem from words found in newspaper headlines:



Ideas:

1. Have children write sentences with words from the newspaper
2. Have blanks in sentences or poems for children to fill with words from newspaper headlines
3. Display a picture and ask children to find words from newspapers to describe it.

Obituaries

The teacher prepares a box of "dead" objects, such as a used tea bag, a broken rubber band, a used toothpaste tube, a pencil stub etc.

The class is divided into groups. Each group is asked to write an obituary for the given object.. Print the obituary on a large sheet of paper using magic markers or felt tip pens and be prepared to share it with the rest of the class.

Note: It is best to give students the obituary page of a newspaper to use as a model.

USED TOOTHPASTE TUBE

ULTRABRITE TOOTHPASTE - Famous for its whitening and brightening qualities departed this world July 5, 1978...a victim of inflation... nobody put their money where their mouth is. Survived by many florides and cavity fighting products. In lieu of dentures send contribution to Dutchess County Dental Clinic, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.. Visiting hours will immediately follow breakfast, lunch and dinner.

WRITING FROM ADVERTISING

Buying

Divide the class into groups. Each person is to examine the classified ads of one newspaper. Choose one item you would like to buy. Explain to the rest of your group what the item is and your reasons (serious or humorous) for wanting it.

And the end of the time period, explain the activity to the rest of the class and give sample items and reasons.

This activity can be adapted to various grade levels:

1. Use catalogues and newspapers to choose items you want to buy.
2. Write a classified ad for a favorite object or one you want to unload.
3. Expand a classified ad into a paragraph.

4. Ask students to take a position on a slogan and write a composition supporting the position.
5. Examples of slogans involving other disciplines:
   Science: GAS EXPANDS
   Math: DIVIDE AND CONQUER

Slogans

Your group has been hired by a company which manufactures campaign buttons. Your job is to create slogans and design buttons for the following:

1. Promoting the reading of comic books.
2. Promoting teacher power.
3. Promoting travel to Antarctica.
4. Promoting energy from windmills.
5. Wiping out earthquakes.
6. Eliminating punctuation.
7. Eliminating admistrators.
8. Playing a kazoo.
9. A pet cause of your own choosing.

Remember that the slogan must be brief---no more than five or six words---and it must also have impact.

At the end of the time period discuss the basic skills involved. Report the activity to the rest of the class. It might be fun if each one wears his button during the report.

Advertisement

Directions:

Your group is to write an advertisement (30 words or less) to sell an unusual item. You may use one of the examples below or one of your own creation.

1. A pound of hot air
2. A used World War II bomber
3. Five broken nails and a pound of sawdust
4. Two used Bounty towels

WRITING FROM PICTURES

Using Pictures

Assignment: Find a picture and write about the emotion being shown in the picture.

Objective: To motivate reading students to interpret expressions and put their ideas on paper.

Related activities:

1. Have students exchange papers and write from a different point of view.
2. Have students change new verbs for worn out ones.
3. Have sutdents proofread and rewrite.
4. Have students change common nouns to proper nouns where possible.
5. Have students find synonyms.
6. Have students write an ad based on the picture.
7. Ask students to write a triante, cinquain or couplet based on the picture.
8. Ask students to write as if they were the person in the picture to tell how they fell.

New Angle

Select a series of slides or pictures. Divide the class into groups. Assign one picture or slide to each group. Tell the pupils to study the picture carefully with the picture UPSIDE DOWN. Do not look at the picture right side up at any time. As a group list all the details that you can, observing the picture from that angle. You should have 20 to 25 details.

What word would you select to give the dominant impression of the picture if you were:
a) travel agents looking for clients
b) environmentalists addressing a P.T.A.
c) propectors for mineral or oil wealth looking for backing

Which details would you use to support your dominant impression in each case?

Now change pictures with a group who has a similar task, but this time study the picture RIGHT SIDE UP. Do the same tasks.

At the end of the time period, get together with the group with whom you exchanged pictures and compare notes.

Variations:

1. Have the students list details to appeal to other senses. What sounds could be heard in the scene? What scents might be there? What textures? (List opposite each object that suggests sound, scent or texture).
2. Have students write a dialogue between two characters or details found in the picture. They could be commenting on other characters or details...or proposing changes to the area.
3. Other possib ilities:
   Have students write a ...
   a) travel ad
   b) social studies report
   c) letter to a friend
   d) letter to an editor suggesting an improvement to the area.

Observation and Organization

A collage, which is prepared ahead by the teacher, is presented to the class as a picture. The class is divided into groups and is told that the picture is an important clue in a murder mystery. Members of each group are detectives trying to figure out the meaning of the clue.

List 25 details that can be observed in the picture. Choose the details that seem incongruous and explain orally the way various details seem to contradict each other. Agree on some deductions or inferences.

Decide on a method of organization and write a memo to your superior officer reporting on your deductions and suggesting a method of investigation to follow.

Focusing

Display a slide or picture. Tell the students to imagine that they have approached this scene from a distance. They are to describe the scene as it looked from 50-100 yards away, then 10 yards away and then from the position of the photographer. The last (the close-up) is the most important. You could reverse and be moving away from the scene, but the close-up would still be the most important.

Begin by making lists of what might be seen from each position. Make each list as specific as possible, for example: "tawny fan-shaped leaves" instead of "autumn leaves".

Decide what you want to do to unify the three descriptions and write a rough draft. How will your writing style and method of unification take into account the fact that you may be writing for a literary magazine?

Have one of the other people in your class read your rough draft. Ask the other person to look for specific detail and make a little check mark at each, to underline every phrase or clause of transition, and at the bottom of the paper write a one sentence statement of what you did to unify the paper.

Revise your paper after a discussion of the analysis with the other person. Prepare a second draft.

Observation and Inferences

I

Select and display a slide or a picture. List at least 10 to 12 details which can be observed in the picture. Infer what this same scene looks like from about 10 yards further away.

Write a rough draft of a description of this scene from 10 yards further away, keeping in mind that this description will be the opening of a mystery story.

Exchange rough drafts with someone else in the class. Read each other's papers and write L.I. over each logical inference (but only if you think it is logical) and put a check mark over every specific detail. Write a one sentence description of the modd the other person evoked.

Discuss your analysis with each other. Revise your own paper in light of the discussion and prepare a second draft.

II

Divide the class into small groups. Select a slide and present it to each group. Each group pretends it is a group of detectives investigating a robbery that has taken place in the slide.

Each group is to list 25 details that can be observed in the slide.

The group should list the inferences that can be drawn from these details.

Each group is to write a memo to their superior officer giving the inferences and pointing out the reasons for the inferences. Suggest the next step or steps to be followed in the investigation.

WRITING FROM OBJECTS

Objects

Objectives:
1. To practice thinking skills in singling out elements, forming associations, and making generalizations.
2. To write an expository piece using classification.

Each person is to put an object from his or her pocket in the center of the class.

As a class, discuss one or more ways the object can be classified and give a justification for each method. All objects must be classified under the same system, for example: size-shape-use-or material.

As a class, choose one system and write an exposition of the system and the justification for classifying the objects under that system. What sub-classes do you need? What object goes in each sub-class? (one piece of writing).

Other activities:
1. Ask students to look at pictures of various animals, classify i.e. according to useful, domestic pets, wild etc. Tell how they are alike...or tell how they are different.

2. List two or three characters from literature. Ask the students to classify them according to some scheme...i.e. how each faced adversity, or how each tried to manipulate friends.

3. Have students read three or four essays on the same subject. Have them classify similar elements...i.e. opinion and persuasive. Have them write their own essay on the same subject.

4. Pass objects around the classroom to be toughed, smelled, looked at , listened to and examined closely. Students write down their thoughts as they examine each object. Form small groups. Students should share with other members of the group their thoughts regarding the properties of each object and whether the properties are significant.

Burke's Pentad

An activity to elicit specific detail and increase attention to purpose and audience.

Act	(What?)
Scene	(Where?)
Agent	(Who?)
Agency	(By what means?)
Purpose	(Why?)

The who, what, where questions for producing content are familiar, but further discussion may prove even more rewarding. After the answers to the pentad are listed on the chalkboard, ask the children to tell about each. What aspect is the most important and takes the most time to explain? How does one aspect influence the other? How will the relative importance of each aspect change according to the purpose and audience for the piece of writing?

After the above discussion students write their composition.

Conceptual Blockbusters - To establish General Attributes

Example: Each student receives a marshmallow.
1. What are its possible characteristics?
2. Fill in possibilities under each heading.
3. Select one at random from each column to create a new object.
4. How much can you change it and still have it remain a marshmallow?

Size	Texture	Smell	Taste	Color	Weight

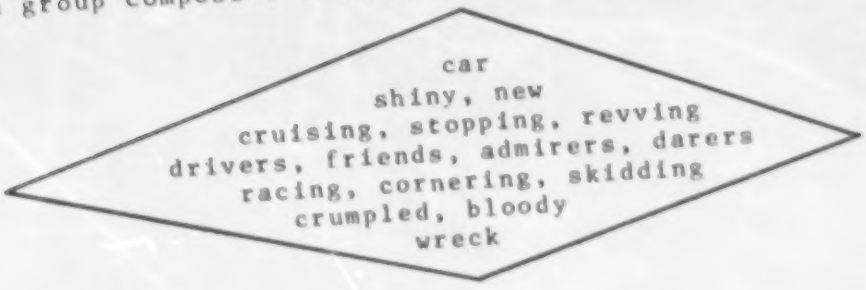
Revision: add, omit, substitute (encourage us of a thesaurus), rearrange (use sentence combining).

1. Present problem: You manufacture toothbrushes and can't sell enough. You are looking for ways to improve the toothbrush and increase sales. To whom will you try to sell the improved version?
   a. What would you add?
   b. What would you take away?
   c. What would you substitute?
   d. What would you rearrange?

2. Students choose their own objects and go through list a - d. Then they write a page of advertising copy to try to sell the product. This approach can be used for other subject areas, e.g. Social Studies...(what to do about the electoral college).

Object Diamontes

As a group compose a diamonte (diamond) about an object.....



Poetry Writing - Choral Reading

Divide the class into groups. Each group is to write a cinquain about a given object and present a choral reading of it. Remember that there are a number of ways to do a choral reading.

A cinquain is a five line poem which follows this formula:

1st line - one word---name an object
2nd line - two words--describe the object
3rd line - three words--actions of the object
4th line - four words--give an attitude toward or a feeling about the object
5th line - one word---rename the object

INVADERS

ILLUMINATED, RANKED

MARCHING, DISCIPLINED, THREATENING

RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!

INVADERS

A Top

Pass a top around the class. Let the students examine and play with it. Each student should write down descriptive words about the top.

Have the students write haikus or other short poems:

1. Compare the top to your life.
2. Compare the top to a day at school.
3. Compare the top to something else in motion.
4. Other comparisons which may occur to you.

Place the poems on large pieces of paper using magic markers or felt tip pens. Be prepared to read your poem to the rest of the class.

Objectives:

1. To stimulate divergent thinking in
   a. singling out elements
   b. forming associations
   c. solving problems

2. To write a clear explanation of the use of objects in an unusual situation.

Divide the class into small groups. Each person in the group is to put an object from his or her pocket into the center of the group.

As a group imagine that you have been cast away on a desert island. Brainstorm all the ways you could use the ojbects for survival or for escape.

Then as a group decide on some method of organization and write an explanation of the uses for these objects in your imagined situation.

At the end of the time period explain your task and read your group composition to the rest of the class.

Other activities:

1. Priority of objects...you can only keep one or two of the objects. Which will you keep, and why?

2. Write a composition about one object and how to use it.

3. Decide which of the objects would be the least beneficial and explain why?

4. Pick one category or quality which all the objects share and explain.

5. Use the given objects in literary context or historical context.

WRITING FROM LITERATURE

Shopping Lists

In small groups have the students plan shopping lists for characters from well known children's stories. The list does not necessarily have to be for the hero or heroine of the story.

Examples:

1. the ugly sisters in "Cinderella"
2. the three bears in "Goldilocks"
3. the witch in "Hansel and Gretel"
4. the giant in "Jack and the Beanstalk"
   or any other character you wish.....

Be prepared to justify each item on the list in reference to the story. Choose one member of the group to share the list with the rest of the class.

Skills involved:

1. memory and recall
2. characteristics of a person
3. attention to details
4. itemizing
5. note-taking
6. supporting detail
7. vocabulary
8. interpretation of reading

extension or variations of this activity:

1. alphabetize the shopping list
2. list materials need for an activity or for making something
3. categorize and outline the items
4. make a comparison of the items on the list
5. modernize the story
6. write dialogue between the characters about the items
7. write and enact a skit involving the items on the list.

Garage (Rummage) Sale

Garage sales have caught on in the world of literature. Characters from stories, novels, plays read in your classes this year have decided to hold a garage sale. What item or items does each character decide to put on sale? Why?

A list of the possible characters, items and reasons for sale follows:

Character	Item	Reason
Ishmael	harpoon	n'er to sea again
Lennie	dead mouse	got a puppy
Oliver Twist	rags, clothes	been adopted
Issac Boxtel	tulips	went bankrupt
Hester Pryne	sewing kit	daughter - rich
Romeo	portrait of Rosaline	loves Juliet
Atticus	rifle	hated killing
Mme. Defarge	knitting needles	Revolution succeeded
Hans Brinker	skates	won new ones
Thoreau	fishing pole	vegetarian
Charlie	college texts	couldn't read them
Tom Sawyer	paint and brush	job finished
Jody	watermill	grew up
Huck Finn	raft	decided to live on land
Molly/Animal Farm	ribbons	human ornaments
Wife of Bath	yellow striped stockings	latest husband didn't like them
Amanda	telephone	husband fell in love long distance
Ethan	horse	his wife had him at bay
Socrates	wine	preferred hemlock
Lady Godiva	saddle	wanted to ride bareback
Willie Loman	sample case	his line didn't work anymore-and he'd sampled enough
witches / MacBeth	cauldron	doesn't bubble well bought stainless steel

Ways of organizing the above list:
1. Usual and unusual items
2. By cost or value
3. Antique and contemporary items
4. From least to more expensive in terms of cost to the character
5. Practical and luxury items
6. Representation of failure or success to the character
7. By literary types the characters were in

Extensions of the activity:
1. Ask which literary characters would buy the items. Why?
2. Use the activity as a review of the literature read during the year.
3. Ask students: "If you had $10.00, which items would you buy and what would you do with them?"
4. Ask students to make a collage of 5 items and explain what the collage represents.
5. Ask students to write ads for the garage sale.
6. Ask students to be one of the items and write personal histories of themselves.
7. Ask students to write dialogue between two of the items commenting on their lives, or the appearance of other items, or the characters selling the items or the characters buying the items.

8. Have the students place the items in the historical era to which they belong. Could they appear in any other era? Why or why not?
9. Have a simulated garage sale in class. Each student brings in an item, tells its history, and tries to sell it to other members of the class.

Characters

The students are asked to choose a literary character they would like to be at that moment of time if they could not be themselves. Each student in turn explains who he or she would like to be and explains why.

This activity could be varied by asking people to choose:

1. a historical personage
2. a tree, flower or vegetable
3. an animal
4. a car
5. an element
6. a part of speech
7. or any number of other things

This activity involves statement and supporting reason and can be used for either speaking or writing.

Divide the class into small groups. Choose characters from literature with whom most of the class will be familiar. Assign each group one of the following tasks:

1. Write a birth announcement for a fictional character
2. Write a wedding announcement for a fictional character
3. Write an expense account for a fictional character
4. Write a suicide note for a fictional character
5. Write an obituary for a fictional character
6. Write an epitaph for a fictional character

At the end of the time period have one member of each group explain the activity and read the creation to the rest of the class.

News Broadcast

In small groups have the students plan a TV news broadcast based on a well-known children's story; for example: "Red Riding Hood", "Jack and the Beanstalk", or "Cinderella". Include a weather report, sports update and a commercial.

When the task is completed have each group present their broadcast to the rest of the class.

Lone-Rangering

This activity is called Lone-Rangering because it is the way the author of the old Lone Ranger series was supposed to have worked.

Objectives: Learning the key elements of a short story
Improving story-telling skills
Improving story-writing

The teacher prepares 5 sets of cards with 5 cards in each set. The five sets include:

1. Five names of heroes or heroines
2. Five names of villians or antagonists
3. Five different settings
4. Five different problems for the hero or heroine
5. Five different solutions to the problem

Members of the group draw one card at random from each set. Their instructions follow:

Together the group will plan a story from the given elements... 1. protagonist...2. antagonist...3. setting...4. problem...5. solution. Try to include dialogue. At the end of the time period, one member of the group will tell the story to the entire class. Jot down the story outline and the key words to aid the story teller.

TIPS FOR EVALUATION

No magic formula awaits teachers faced with evaluating (grading) written compositions; however, a number of considerations may be helpful as teachers confront this task. The following list was developed as a result of the discussion of evaluation and the numerous points made at that time.

Criteria for evaluation should be known to the teacher and the students.

Evaluate the paper for a few things as opposed to many.

Have students select the writing to be evaluated.

Do not evaluate every piece of writing.

Use two grades, possibly.

Give positive responses.

Realize that grades are subjective.

Give attention to areas other than the mechanics of language.

Return papers quickly.

Stagger composition assignments.

Use evaluation as one basis for instruction.

Know what instruction has preceded evaluation.

Assess the composing process as well as the product.

Use peer evaluation. Have another class evaluate the papers.

Use short theme or paragraph assignments more often.

Have individual conferences when feasible.

Have group discussion of papers with suggestions for improvement.

Accept no papers that are sloppily done - illegibly written.

Distribute to students a ditoed list of editing symbols to be used in evaluation.

Have a student rewrite another student's work.

Have students summarize their composition in one or two sentences.

Read Evaluating Writing edited by Charles Cooper and Lee Odell.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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